

# 月 空 キノ Tsuki no Kino

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月キ!

Tsuki Ki!

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「SHINOBU-SAN TOLD ME  
THAT HE 'WANTS' EVEN  
SOMEONE LIKE ME...」

「I'M A GODDESS.  
I'M AMAZING!  
I'M GRATEFUL TO  
SHINOBU FOR  
TREATING ME.」

ELNI

A KIND OF PITIFUL GIRL  
THAT CLAIMS HERSELF TO BE A  
GODDESS. SHINOBU HELPED HER, SO  
SHE WANTED TO GIVE HIM A  
GUARDIAN SPIRIT. BUT...

LUNA

A GIRL, WHO ONE MORNING SUDDENLY  
APPEARED BEFORE SHINOBU. CLAIMS TO BE  
SHINOBU'S SLAVE. HAS BIG BREASTS.



「HEH. BE  
GRATEFUL THAT  
YOU'RE SO  
BEAUTIFUL.」

NANJOU  
SHINOBU

PROTAGONIST. KNOWS MARTIAL ARTS.  
BECAUSE HE HELPED THE STARVING ELN,  
HIS FATE COMPLETELY CHANGED—?

「DON'T FORGET TO  
PLAY WITH ME TOO,  
OKAY? I'LL RUN TO  
SEED IF YOU DON'T  
GIVE ME ANY  
ATTENTION.」

NANJOU  
NAZUNA

SHINOBU'S LITTLE SISTER.  
LOVES HER BROTHER AND  
CATS.

「AH, YEAH.  
THANKS. YOU'RE REALLY  
KIND, NANJOU-KUN.」

GOGYOU  
HIJIRI

SHINOBU'S CLASSMATE. MEMBER OF THE  
KENDO CLUB. A STRONG SENSE FOR  
THE SPIRITUAL.



「U-UWA!  
B-BROTHER,  
TH- THAT GIRL.  
WH- WHO  
• IS THAT  
GIRL??」

IN GREAT  
SURPRISE NAZUNA  
POINTED WITH A  
SHAKING FINGER AT  
THE BLONDE GIRL.

# Prologue

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...Wait a moment.

I woke up in the morning and was completely frozen.

I opened my eyes and besides me soundly slept a girl.

Shiny long, blonde hair.

Bright, white skin.

Long eye-lashes.

I wasn't sure if it was because she naked, but her beautiful collarbone was intriguing.

Letting my glance go down from the collarbone, placed her big and soft-looking breasts into my vision.

Sleeping on her back created a fantastic valley between her breasts and below a guard against all ages, named the blanket was covering her, making the spectacle impossible to see.

Every time she quietly breathed out through her half-open light pink lips, her two voluptuous breasts slightly shook..

When she moved with a "Nng", her breasts trembled.

A really great sight was right in front of my eyes, but....was this a dream?

To confirm it, I sat up and pinched my face, but it was really painful.

Basically, this wasn't a dream.

As it seemed, the situation of me waking up besides a blondie (with big breasts) I'd never seen before was not a dream.

Troubled, I desperately tried to recall memories from the last night, but I didn't remember anything besides going to bed after doing my homework.

None at all.

Blankness.

But a blondie was without a doubt sleeping besides me....

And I wasn't in a dream...

It was reality...

"W- What's going on?"

A cold sweat ran down my cheek.

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# Chapter 01: Mad Dog and a Beautiful Blondie

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Their catchphrase was “Deliciousness that makes you hard”.

A wiener coloured with ketchup and mustard.

Gently packed between wheaten bread with fresh salad decorated.

—One hotdog, 198yen.

I was on my way back from the Doujo.

Attracted by the majestically displayed hotdog, I bought one without hesitation, seeing as I was a bit hungry anyway.

For some reason, the girl at the counter blushed while she put the hotdog into a bag with the words “One deliciousness that makes you h-hard”.

Hearing the words, “Thanks for your purchase” behind me, I left the shop. Putting the bag with the hotdog in the basket at the front of my bicycle I was about to ride back home, when I suddenly came to a realisation.

That, if I took the hotdog home like this, my little sister Nazuna wouldn’t stay quiet about it.

I imagined Nazuna occupying the living room, absorbed in a game with cats in a fierce fight.

As it stood, today she had no club activities and was in a good mood, saying “Today I’m a cat. Meow”.

I thought to myself that this wasn’t just today, but she’s always a cat, but I better keep that to myself.

The problem was what kind of reaction Nazuna would show, when I came home with my hotdog.

I was sure Nazuna would definitely want that hotdog.

It was her, after all.

Even if I didn’t share it with her, I was sure she would say “You can at least give me a piece of the salad~” with a sad expression on her face while crying in meows.

“....She’s a real cry-baby.”

Mumbling that and letting out a sigh, I left the hotdog in my bicycle basket and went back to the store to buy one for Nazuna too.

I bet she would be happy even with something as small as a hotdog.

While imagining her throwing up both her arms and screaming “Yay~” with a big smile on her face, I got back to my bicycle, but...

“Mpf, mpf, mpf”

What was that?

As it seemed, someone was eating a hotdog in front of my bicycle. Looking into the basket of my bicycle, revealed just the sorry, empty bag of the store, with no traces of the hotdog left. Where did my “deliciousness that makes you h-hard” go? Shocked, I approached my bicycle and once again looked at the strange person still eating the hotdog. Maybe a foreigner? Brilliant silver hair tied up into twin tails. Skin white as snow. Big pupils as red as a ruby. Facial features and a small frail build that reminded me of some western doll. The yellow hoodie she wore was too big for her, maybe the size didn’t fit. She might have been one or two years younger than me. She looked like she was 15 or 16. A girl with crimson eyes and silver hair. In my head I recalled the word Albino. “Delicious~” The albino girl was devouring the hotdog with a cute smile on her face. A heart-warming scene like when you think of small animals— would be what I normally thought. However. “That was good.” After having eaten my whole hotdog, the girl placed her hands together with an expression that she still hadn’t had enough. With a smile, I called out to the girl. “Yo, lovely girl. How about a drink after the hotdog?” “Mh? Sure. How considerate, thanks.” She faced me and seeing my smile, she froze. “Okay, drink as much as you want. I’ll make blood-red tomato juice right now.” “Right now? How...?” The girl slowly retreated, but I didn’t let her. I grabbed her arm tightly. “Hey, where does the ingredient plan to go to?” “I- In- Ingredient!?” With an evil laugh, I rolled up the sleeve of the girl’s clothes, who was shaking in fear. Doing so, revealed her snow-white skin.

It was so beautiful, that I was captivated.

A small and soft arm.

I felt her warm body-temperature on my palms, but I wouldn't be stopped with just that.

Getting all pumped up, I wrung her arm lightly like a wet piece of cloth.

Immediately a scream, "Uwaa~" came out of her mouth.

"I- It hurts. It really hurts! Nothing will come out! Even if you do this, nothing will come out!"

"Don't give up! Don't you give up now! Why give up now? Try a bit harder!

You can do it! You can! You definitely can do it!"

"R- Really? Okay, come! Bring it on!"

Cheering her on with my passionate acting, the girl also got into the spirit and shouted that.

.....Of course there was no change.

"You lack spirit."

Mercilessly saying that, I wrung her arm again.

"No, it's impossible! It's not a problem of spirit. Aww. Aww. It hurts! I'm sorry. Forgive me. Rather than world peace, love thy neighbour that's right in front of you!"

I didn't quite get it, but it sounded funny, so I let go.

"Heh. Be grateful that you're so beautiful. Normally I would have punished someone like you with dragging you through the town behind my bicycle."

"B- Beautiful...? H- Hey, stop that. You're embarrassing me."

Said the girl, embarrassed with her flushed cheeks.

"...Besides, why did I have to suffer that? My arm really hurts, you know?"

With the words, "Look at this", she raised her right arm up to her shoulder.

I saw that her white skin, had indeed gotten bright red.

But, "Give it a rest already or do you want me to turn your white butt red next?"

"Now it's s- sexual harassment! I might be really kind-hearted, but even I get angry if I get lectured for no reason!"

The girl puffed her cheeks in anger.

It seemed this idiot really didn't understand the situation.

I thought about wringing her left arm next, but her teary eyes stopped me. What a troublesome girl.

Guess I had no choice but to explain it to her from scratch.

"Say, you ate the hotdog that was in there, right?"

I asked that while pointing at my bicycle.

"It was really good!"

She replied in an energetic tone.

“I bought that you know.”

“One more!”

Said the girl again, with an energetic tone and a big smile while innocently holding out her hands.

Her smile was so lovely that I was captivated again.

But, so what.

“Don’t kid me.”

Needless to say, I chopped her on the head.

“O- Oww! But this isn’t all that bad.”

“Uwaa, creepy.”

Unconsciously, I backed off one step, but after coughing once I continued.

“A- Anyways, you ate my hotdog. You’re deeply guilty.”

“Eh? Was it that bad?”

“Yes. As deep as the Marina trench.”

“Is that deep enough to crush your collarbone?”

I wasn’t so sure about the norms of depth, but I nodded anyway.

The girl reacted with a “Mhm” and crossed her arms.

“Then I’ll forgive that sin.”

What an ego.

“Then I shall judge that sin.”

“Then I ask thy, is hunger a sin?”

“Yes!”

I extended my forefinger and middle finger and drilled them into the girl’s right arm.

“U-Uwa~ That stings!”

Hitting her already red arm seemed to have the same effect as a cut and she was jumping up and down while holding her arm.

“W-What are you doing!? What are you going to do if that becomes a habit!”

“....Nothing really”

I couldn’t care less about it, so when I answered like that, the girl slowly drew closer to me.

“Mh, when it becomes a habit, then I can have you take responsibility?”

And with a slightly flushed face she said “I wouldn’t be all that against it” and started to draw circles with her finger on my chest. Every time her long and slender finger finished a circle on my chest, the warmth of her fingertip gave me a little shock.

But looking at the girl who switched from drawing circles on my chest to poking my cheeks, I was certain.

She wasn't reflecting at all.

It looked like one more punishment was needed. Just when I started swinging my arm for a second attack on the girl's arm,  
—Growl, I heard a stupid sound from her stomach.

In an instant, the girl lost all her strength, slumped down and just sat right there.

“Don't fart”

Looking down at her while at a loss for words and being cautious, the girl fiercely raised her head and glared at me.

“What are you saying to a girl!? I'm going to get angry! I'm hungry!”

“Just starve to death”

Having been so ruthless again, I pulled out the hotdog that I bought for Nazuna from the bag in my left hand and displayed it to the girl.

“Want it? But of course, I'm not giving it to you.”

“Would you change your mind if I let you touch my breasts once? Twice is okay too.. no wait, you get three times!”

“....Just how straight forward can you be”

Looking into the serious eyes of the girl begging me, made my anger drop like a ship riding on the air.

I let out a little sigh and handed her the hotdog.

“C- Can I really have it?”

I nodded and said “Yes.” to her, whose eyes turned to stare at the hotdog.

“Thank you!”

A smile blossomed on her face.

Good for you. Had you been a guy, your face wouldn't be recognisable anymore now.

Looking at her gorging on the hotdog, I let out another sigh.

Aw, I was sure Mum would call me docile again for this.

Somehow I was starting to feel regret, so I reached out my hand to her head and like you pat a dog, I started to pat her head, “Good girl~ Good Girl~”  
Her silver hair was fine and soft.

She was so absorbed in eating the hotdog that she didn't resist. While continuing to pat her hair, I suddenly began to wonder what kind of shampoo she has been using.

“Thank you. It was delicious.”

The girl had finished the hotdog and had a big smile on her face—Growl. Her stomach rang again.

“....No, it's not like that.”

In this awkward situation where she couldn't say anything, she started to

shake her hands with a serious face in an attempt to convey her feelings.  
“I don’t know what you mean by that, but just how hungry can you be? Are you eating your breakfast properly everyday?”

I asked that while rustling through her hair.

“....The last time I ate was three days ago, I think? Usually I go by with eating mist.”

She answered in a tragic voice that gives you goose bumps.

“....Want to go fetch some lunch?”

I was feeling sorry for her, so I proposed that, but..

“Mh? You’re hitting on me? I don’t mind, you know.”

“Farewell”

I had nothing more to say. I turned around and headed towards my bicycle.

“W- Wait! Please wait! Don’t abandon me~”

And she hugged me tightly from behind. Though they were a bit small, there were certainly two soft things pressing hard against my back.

Argh, that was foul play.

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When we arrived at a nearby family restaurant, she must have been really hungry. She ordered three things and was stuffing herself with the dishes once they arrived, with a satisfied smile on her face.

On the other side, I only had a glass of water. It was the result of taking a peek into my wallet.

I wondered what I was doing. My endless good-will made me want to sigh, but looking at her happily eating her salisbury steak made me forget all misfortune. “Mh? You want a bite? Ah~” She said with a piece of salisbury steak pierced on her fork pointed at me. Taken aback I answered “You have a rice grain sticking on your cheek, you know?”

“Don’t mind it.”

“No, I do mind.”

“Whatever, here, Ah~”

“Sure, sure”

While taking the offered salisbury steak, I also took the rice stuck on her cheek away. She was like a kid, geez.

“Ahm”

....Ahm? A sudden warm feeling on my fingertip. I let my vision fall towards my hand and... the finger I had used to remove the rice was in the small mouth of the girl.

“That’s dirty.”

“Shat’s not thue.”

“Don’t talk with a person’s finger in your mouth.”

Her soft and warm lips enveloped my finger and her tongue was licking it. I pulled my finger out of her mouth, thinking it was actually somewhat erotic.

After licking up the rice grain with a big smile and a “Yummy”, she reached out for the fries and spaghetti which were left on the table.

I looked at her with a forced smile.

Looking up close, she was a really cute girl with long eye-lashes and a well-ordered lineament.

She would be unrivaled if she wouldn’t talk... Well, seeing her eat so happily also had its charm. I was gazing at her without pause. And when the girl said “Thanks for the food” by clapping her hands together satisfied, I started to speak.

“You fell for it. If you want me to pay for that food here, you have to listen to what I say...Nah, just a joke. Don’t make such a shocked face. It’s my treat.”



"I- I see. That surprised me. I was so surprised, I thought my heart would start to beat!"

"Mhm~ So, what's your name?"

"Ignored? You just ignored my gag? Was it too difficult for you? You know, normally your heart is already beating—"

"No need for weird explanations. It won't get us anywhere."

I cut into her speech.

"By the way, my name is Nanjou Shinobu. It's my dream to be called "Shinobu~" by a cute girl."

"Hey, Shinobu~. How do you think we look to others right now?"

"So, your name?"

"Ignored? You ignored me again? When I specially fulfilled your dream...."

After she mumbled some complaints, she puffed her chest and answered.

"Fine. I'm a Goddess!"

".....Should I call an ambulance?"

Aww, she was such a poor girl.

"D- Don't look at me with such pitying eyes! It's the truth!"

"Sure, sure. Then I'll call you Idiot, because Goddess is a bit hard to say out aloud."

"That's rude!"

"Then hotdog thief. But that's too long, so I'll shorten it to dog."

"Graaar!"

Guess she didn't like it, because she stretched out both her hands and growled at me. One hell of a mad dog.

"So, what should I call you?"

"Let's see...."

Crossing her arms in thought, the Goddess answered.

"El Niño. It's long, so just Elni is fine."

"I get it, dog".

"Yes, I'm a mad dog. The man who they call mad dog. A dangerous dog that attacks its— wait! Who are you calling mad dog!? Who are you calling a man!? Can't you see my breasts!"

The dog became enraged by her own words.

Not that I cared, but what did she want me to do with her small chest that she pointed out?

If she wanted me to jump at them, then I, for sure, wouldn't hesitate!

"Man, you're so rude! Calling me dog and all— Wuff, wuff!"

The dog said wuff, wuff in anger.

"Sorry, dog. But if I'm right, El Niño means "God's child" in Spanish, right?"

You want to become a god or what?"

I learned about El Niño in school.

"Like I said, I AM a goddess!"

Hum, hum. The dog flailed her arms. She was really just like a kid.

"Well, I can't really believe it. To me you're just a pitiful girl, who stole my hotdog and got treated to some food by me out of pity."

"You can exaggerate a bit there, so can't you call me a pretty girl?"

"You're just a pitiful puppy, who stole my hotdog and got treated to some food by me out of pity."

"P- Puppy!? My, that's cute! You thought I would be happy if you call me that? .... I was just a bit happy."

...She was happy after all.

"But don't get me wrong. Don't think I'll always play the cute little dog. I'll even bite my owner in anger, when he does something I don't like!"

"Oh, what a cheeky puppy we have here. Where are you from?"

"Born in Japan and raised here and there."

"Do stupid people actually have friends?"

Elni pointed at me with a smile and said.

"Friend!"

I should smack her a good one.

Still smiling she grabbed my hand and shook it.

Her soft and little hand took mine and swung it up and down.

"...So back on the topic, you said you're a goddess, but what kind of Goddess?"

"An amazing Goddess!"

She gave me a stupider answer than I expected. She was beyond help, how she could even proudly stick out her chest at that. Even though I would have bursted out in laughter if she had said "Goddess of appetite". Letting my vision drop, I slightly nodded "Oh, sure".

"W- Why are you averting your gaze now? A- And that dubious smile! You don't believe me! You don't believe me, right!?"

When I honestly answered with "Yeah", the dog said angrily.

"Now I'm angry! If you go that far, I'll show you some proof!"

Proof, huh? Since the girl in front of me was not only an idiot, but also a dog, she would surely do something disappointing. I felt sorry for her, so I better stop teasing her.

"It's okay, Elni."

"It's not Elni! Call me Mad Dog!"

So she liked that, huh.

“Well, calm down. Here, pudding. Eat some pudding.”

“Yay~ Pudding~ Wait! You don’t believe me, do you Shinobu?”

“—Who said you can refer to me so casually?”

“Ah, I’m sorry— wait, isn’t it fine? You just called me Elni too, Shinobu.

Names are a quick way to deepen one’s friendship, aren’t they?”

“The deepening part aside, you said you would show me proof, but you won’t suddenly start some rain ritual, would you? It would trouble others around us.”

“I won’t do that. If I made it rain, you would have to go home drenched, since you don’t have an umbrella with you. I’m grateful to you, who treated me to some food. So I’ll do something nice for you.”

Mh? Nice, huh.

“...Sounds erotic.”

“Mh? You want something perverted? Have you already falling in love with my dynamite body?”

“Nope.”

I affirmed that with a short smile to Elni, who took a pose like a model and gave me a wink.

She was indeed slender and had a nice figure, but for some reason she only looked like an idiot to me.

I saw some disappointment in her eyes, but not minding it, I continued.

“Well, jokes aside.. So, what are you going to do for me?”

Elni was depressed, but upon my words, she nodded with “O- Okay” and pulled something out of her pocket on the front of her hoodie.

It was a huge flier. How did she keep it in there? Was her pocket connected to the fourth dimension or what? Quite an intriguing question.

“Look!”

Elni shoved the flier in front of my eyes.

“Let’s see.”

On the flier was written “Give you, Guardian Spirit” in big letters.

“At least write Guardian Spirit in Kanji. You spiritual impostor.”

“N- No good, right off the bat? And I even get called impostor! I’m angry! But I’m tolerant, so I’ll forgive you! And because you gave me food, I’ll give you a special discount on the initial 1000yen! Half off! 500yen! A real bargain!”

I put my hands together like in prayer and answered her, who seemed to be giving me a great service.

“Yeah, my Goddess. Please have mercy on me. Some Mad Dog had a real feast at my expense, so I only have 100 yen left on me.”

“Y- You have s- such a big heart. As a Goddess, I’m moved. Yes, moved!

That's why it'll be for free this time. Yeah, I'll charge nothing."

Guess she felt guilty. Elni averted her gaze and started to sweat.

"Oh, for free? But you kinda creep me out, so I'll pass."

"C- Creep!?"

Maybe she received a shock, but after she groaned an "Ummh",

"Shinobu! That's as far as your mocking goes! I'll give a part of my divinity! I repay a favour with a favour! I'll make you super, mega happy!"

With a bump she suddenly stood up from her chair and started to take some nonsensical pose while shouting "Hah! Fuh! Toh! Transform!"

Obviously, all eyes in the restaurant were fixed on her.

When Elni completed her suspicious pose, she extended her right hand to me and shouted,

"BRAAAAH!"

After that,

"Dear costumer, you're bothering the other people."

She was lectured by the waitress.

"B- Braah..."

Elni cried a sad "Brah..."

"I'm sorry. She had a traumatic experience at a family restaurant before, so she sometimes has fits now."

I couldn't bear the sight of the helpless Elni and made an appropriate follow up for now. Then the waitress made a sad face, as she believed my lie.

"...Is that so. Miss, do you want a melon soda?"

"Yeah, I do."

In an instant Elni sat down in her chair.

By the way, the waitress gave Elni and me a melon soda with the words "It's on me.". She was a good person. I'll come here again.

"Okay, Shinobu."

After happily drinking her melon soda, Elni started talking to me.

In the blink of an eye the cup was empty.

"You think of me as an annoying girl, right?"

What was she asking the obvious for?

"That impression will be completely gone after a few days. Listen..."

"Ehm, sorry to interrupt your happy story, but you have cream on your cheek."

"Get it off."

Elni swiftly moved her face closer. There were a lot of things I wanted to say, but I would resemble someone in my family then, so I just got the cream off silently.

The glutton she was, Elni started licking the cream from my finger, just like she did before with the rice grain. Geez, not even my sister Nazuna, who said the same stuff as her, was such a glutton.

“Ohay, ther i shomething I want to gif you.”

“I told you not to speak while licking my finger. I have no clue what you’re saying.”

Her lips had a tight hold on my finger.

The more she licked and sucked my finger with her tongue and lips, the more of a ticklish feeling I got.

When she finished licking my finger clean of any cream, she once again crinkled through the pocket of her hoodie in search of something.

“...Oh, found it. Here.”

Elni pulled out something from her pocket and presented it to me.

It was a silver-blue coloured ring.

“Here, take it”.

Elni took my left hand and put the ring on my ring finger.

‘Why are you putting it on my ring finger?’, crossed my mind, but... I just looked down at the ring.

I was no expert, but the ring sparkling silver and blue, looked really expensive.

“...Can I really take this? It looks pretty expensive? I feel bad taking this just for treating you to a meal.”

“Don’t worry about it. I made it out of empty cans that I collected during a volunteer cleanup in the city. When you wear it, a guardian spirit will come down to you. With the right wavelength, you might even get a really incredible guardian spirit. The charm I did for you earlier was for that too.”

Elni told me “With that, you can enjoy an ultra happy life now, Shinobu.” with a smiling face, but...I looked at the ring once more.

It really didn’t look like it was made out of empty cans.

“Is it really okay?”

“Of course. I’m a Goddess after all. I’m so generous.”

“A Goddess is really incredible. Try flying in the sky for a bit.”

“Sure thing. Nraaah!”

She energetically jumped up and down on the spot.

She was just jumping, not flying at all.

“...The Goddess ate too much and can’t move.”

Elni was energetically jumping before, but suddenly she was covering her mouth with her hands with a sick expression.

Pitiful gazes were concentrated on Elni.

“Stop! Don’t look! Don’t look at her!”

While rubbing the back of Elni, who was still covering her mouth, I shouted that.

After resting at the family restaurant for a while, I split up from Elni. When I told her that I would treat her again when the opportunity presented itself, Elni’s eyes sparkled with “Tell me your cell phone number”, so I told her. Elni herself didn’t have a cell phone, so it was for contacting me when she was in a food emergency.

“....But a guardian spirit, huh”

Riding my bicycle homewards, I looked at the ring Elni gave me.

I was not so naive as to believe her story, but I thought it wouldn’t be too bad if something nice happened and then I reached my home.

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It was quite sudden, but yesterday at the family restaurant I thought that something nice sounds somehow erotic, but.... just what was this? Certainly, I hoped that something nice would happen, but this exceeded my expectations by far.

Let’s confirm the situation.

A quiet morning, where I woke up even earlier than my alarm clock.

When I opened my eyes— An unknown blonde girl was sleeping besides me.

“Wh- What’s this?”

Why was a blonde girl sleeping in my bed? Who was she? Actually, just what had I done?

....I had no clue. All that I could desperately remember from last night was that I diligently completed my homework and went to sleep.

N- No, wait.

Maybe I just didn’t have the memory of it, but I actually went into the city late at night and assaulted the girl based on my instinct? Her blonde hair was right down to my personal preference. What had I done. I was shivering in fear of myself—when another tragedy befell me.

“Brother, it’s morning, Yo! Yo!”

KNOCK KNOCK. After a sudden knock, I could hear the voice of my little sister, Nazuna.

She was having a blast with her “Yo! Yo! Check it out!”

But I couldn’t care less about that. The problem was my current situation.

On my right, a blonde girl. Peeking down, two bouncy and soft fruits.

No matter how you think about it, I was in a situation that would be

misunderstood.

“Brother~ It’s morning~ Really~ I’m not lying~ Indians don’t lie~”  
Yes, it’s always the white who lie. I didn’t even have the time to make such an affirmation. Please someone stop her. Stop Nazuna, who’s happily knocking on the door with a 16-beat rhythm.

“Brother, I’m coming in~”

Not good. No, stop, idiot, noo, nuuu. I was trying to voice my protest, but my mouth only opened and closed like a goldfish and didn’t let out any sounds. What should I do? What could I do?

For no reason, I looked anxiously all around—Then I realised it.

“Oh right. I just have to hide her.”

If I just cover her with the blanket from head down, the blonde girl will be perfectly hidden.

A perfect plan.

Clapping my hands with that insight, I reached out for the blanket to hide the blonde girl beneath it, when suddenly,

“Mmm”

A lovely voice escaped from the mouth of the blonde girl and she opened her previously closed eyes.

She had pure emerald, green eyes that sucked you in.

For a moment I forgot to breathe. I just continued to stare at these charming eyes. Upon that, the blonde girl noticed me. The two green eyes that had captured me, narrowed delighted and the mouth formed a soft smile.

“Good morning”

A beautiful pronunciation. A beautiful voice like the ringing of bells.

While holding the blanket at her breasts, the blonde girl slowly sat up. Not averting her gaze from me, she kept smiling.

Guess it wasn’t a dream after all.

Straight long hair that shone golden. Gentle eyes. Attractive light-pink lips that were shaped nicely.

—So beautiful, is what I thought. Smiling and bathed in the morning sun, she really looked like a Goddess. I wasn’t not exaggerating. To my shame, I seriously thought that. Forgetting my own situation, I was captured by the blonde girl.

But that wasn’t good.

“Brother, are you awake? It’s morning.”

She must have been in doubt as I wasn’t answering. The door knob made a clicking sound when it opened and a lovely girl wearing a middle school uniform with long hair tied up at the back, peeped into the room. Big eyes

and juvenile features. A girl with the loveliness of a kitten. That was my little sister, Nazuna. She had the same pretty features as me— is what I believed, but people always tell me “Your evil mug doesn’t resemble her at all”.

And this Nazuna was looking my way with a smile.

“Ah, you were awake, Brother. Today for breakfast we...got...”

Around the “breakfast” part she must have noticed the blonde girl. Her bright face froze up instantly, petrified.

After an overwhelming silence, where she couldn’t say anything,

“U- UWA! B- Brother, th- that girl. Wh- Who is that girl??”

In great surprise she pointed with a shaking finger at the blonde girl.

Mm, Nazuna. I understand your confusion. But rest assured. I just thought of a way to resolve this situation. With my thumb up and a fresh smile on my face I said,

“I, Nanjou Shinobu, got a girlfriend!”

“Liar!”

It was rejected immediately.

“H- How rude. Why would I lie?”

“I mean, Brother... you’re not popular.”

“Yeah, I admit that—Is what you think I would say?”

“You admitted it just now?”

“No! Seriously, no! To begin with, how can you say that I’m not popular?

Take a close look at me. I’m handsome, right? For example, my bed hair.”

Hearing my self-praise, Nazuna kept staring at me.

Nazuna came near me and literally took a close look at me. That part of her was quite cute. And by no means stupid, in my opinion.

But it wasn’t just Nazuna, for some reason even the blonde girl was staring at me. It gave me a strange feeling. Maybe if I lowered my head and said

“I’m sorry” now, they would still forgive me?

“....Certainly, you’re handsome.”

“Yes, handsome.”

Nazuna and the blonde girl spoke the unbelievable words of approval. Th- This can’t be! ....No, wait. I was handsome. Probably. My stubble could be considered wild.

“But is she really your girlfriend? Brother, you’re strangely considerate and kind, so it’s likely you just brought a troubled foreigner with you? Mum also said ‘Shinobu is an incomprehensible tsundere, so there’s no way he’ll get a girlfriend’.”

“....Don’t tell me, you also agree with Mum?”

Upon asking her, Nazuna nodded plainly with a "Yeah". Okay, I'll use my two manly fists to put Nazuna's face into a bench vise. The bench vise punishment. I clenched my fist and was about to get up when, "Hey kids, what are you making a ruckus about, so early in the morning? Come down already to eat breakf...."

Suddenly a third person's voice interrupted, so I stopped my movement and looked over to the door. There stood a woman, who entered the room perplexed.

Her name was Nanjou Tomoe. Technically, she was my mother. She was supposed to have passed into her 40s this year, but maybe because of her bragging about "bathing in the moonlight stimulates female hormone production", she still looked quite young.

My young mother, just like Nazuna, froze up when she saw me and the blonde girl on the bed. She looked up and gave a big sigh.

"...I knew he would do it some day, but it happened unexpectedly fast."

Wait a moment. What do you mean with "I knew he would do it"?

"Mum, just to be clear, I didn't do anything."

"Sure, sure. Lie all you want. I'll go call the cops now."

My mother pulled out the cell phone from her pocket and started dialling.

Nazuna looked at the display and said "Wah! It's 110. First time I've witnessed it~" with an energetic voice, but then

"—Eh, uwaa! M- Mum, stop. Calm down."

She panicked and snatched away the cell phone from our mother.

Oh, well done, Nazuna.

"You can't, Mum. You might not believe it, but according to brother, this pretty girl is his girlfriend."

"...Shinobu. So, you can no longer differentiate between reality and dreams, huh."

Why are you looking at me with such pitying eyes, Mum?

"I can understand your doubt, Mum."

Nazuna expressed her understanding. But even I understood. After all, it was a lie.

"So we just have to ask the person herself."

Nazuna faced the blonde girl.

Stoop! She's usually so stupid, why would she be calm and logical now of all times? Now I, who was trying to fool you, am in trouble.

"U- Uhm, Miss, are you really my brother's girlfriend?"

Nazuna shyly asked the blonde girl. Her face had written "It's a lie, right?" on it, which pissed me off. I was in trouble. What should I do? If I tried

deceive them here, it would just increase their doubt. I sent off a passionate glare that said "Please help me, Blondie. Lying is fine, just nod for me.", but "I am sorry. I am not Shinobu-san's girlfriend."

Le miserable.

The blonde girl rejected me outright. Well, no wonder. I didn't know what was going on, but she didn't look like she wanted to be here. But it was possible that she could tell us what was going on. I mustered my courage and faced her again.

"Then, who are you?"

I wanted to ask her 'What are you doing here?', but for some reason the blonde girl blushed and answered with a smile before I could ask.

"...I am Shinobu-san's slave."

Slave? Somehow, she brought out a word I was not quite familiar with.

"...What did you say just now?"

Thinking I just misheard her, I asked her. The blonde girl repeated "I am your slave." with flushed cheeks.

A cold sweat run down my forehead.

A really oppressive silence hung over my room.

Totally ignoring the atmosphere, my alarm clock went off with an electronic ringing.

I stopped it right away.

"...I have to practice with my abacus now, so if you'll excuse me."

Escape was the best solution. I swiftly got up and was going to initiate my escape.

"Shinobu!"

"Brother!"

Of course they wouldn't let me.

\* \* \*

The Nanjou household had an early morning emergency meeting. My mother, Nazuna and the blonde girl were sitting at the table in the living room, while I knelt on the floor. By the way, my father was away on a business trip in some country. Also, our cat wasn't here either, since she went with my father.

Thus I had no allies to rely on. Technically Nazuna was my ally, but she was stupid and therefore of no use. Worried about me, she had given me a cat plush toy, but what was I supposed to do with it? For now, I put it on my head.

"Combine – Shinomuncat! I'm strong! Meow!"

In my attempt to flee reality, I shouted “Meeoow!”

“...What are you doing?”

My mother gave me a cold glare and I quickly took the plush toy off my head.

Scary. The next time I do anything weird, I’m getting smacked for sure.

“—Ehem!”

My mother cleared out her throat on purpose and looked at the blonde girl with an apologetic expression.

The blonde girl must have sensed the tense atmosphere, since her expression became serious.

But there wasn’t any tension in her clothes.

The loose white T-Shirt was sticking to her body, but the long sleeves were covering half of her hands and below the T-Shirt’s hem, her white tights and long legs were troubling for your eyes.

Right now, she wasn’t wearing a skirt or pants, just my T-Shirt. There was a reason for it.

It seems she was wearing underwear when she was in my bed.

But since I was thrown out of my room immediately, I haven’t seen it. A real shame.... Well, seeing as she was on my bed in only underwear and her clothes are nowhere to be found, it meant...This was only leading to an improper delusion.

I could agree with why my mother was making an apologetic expression.

“You... Ehm”

“I’m Lunallena. Please call me Luna.”

The blonde— No, Luna-san answered my mother with a soft smile. But I must say, her smile really eased those who looked at it. My mother also started to smile.

“Okay, Luna-chan. I’m Tomoe. Nanjou Tomoe. And this is my daughter, Nazuna. The leftover is the Idiot.”

Why was she saying ‘idiot’ while pointing at me?

“So, Luna-chan, earlier you said you’re the slave of this idiot, but what did you mean? Let me be clear on this, the idiot is an idiot. Moreover he is...still an idiot.”

“Sh- Shinobu-san is not an idiot. He is a kind person.”

Luna-san defended me, who was supposed to be an idiot.

“Shinobu-san told me that he ‘wants’ even someone like me...”

Impressive, Shinobu-san. Even Shinobu-san was surprised. Mother and Nazuna were surprised too. So surprised that they both spat out the tea they were about to drink at the same time.

“Shinobu-san said ‘I’ll make you happy, so stay by my side’ to me. I was really happy.”

Luna-san frenetically went on with her story, ignoring my mother and Nazuna, who were nearly suffocating.

“That is why I wanted to take care of Shinobu-san—”

“W- Wait a moment.”

My mother stopped Luna-san by lifting her open palm, then she glared at me fiercely.

“Shinobu....Is that true?”

“Shinomun doesn’t know!”

Once again putting the cat plush toy on my head, I tried a cute approach.

I thought I might fool them with my cuteness, but it was no good at all.

My mother silently grabbed one chopstick from the table and threw it at me with a big swing.

“Uwa, that’s dangerous!”

I promptly took the plush toy and protected my body with half a turn from the chopstick that came flying at me at an incredible speed. That was close. I would have been gone for, if I hadn’t combined into Shinomuncat. I shuddered looking at the cat plush toy with the chopstick sticking into its forehead.

“Answer me seriously. And don’t dodge it.”

“Don’t dodge? Are you crazy? Besides I don’t remember anything. I have no memories of it.”

When I said so,

“U- Uhm, Shinobu-san.... you do not remember at all?”

Luna-san was looking at me with teary eyes. Emerald green eyes that showed a seriousness that I didn’t expect. Not being able to look her in the eyes, I unknowingly averted my gaze and said.

“Sh- Shinomun doesn’t know!”

Aw, I’m the worst.

“Is...that so.”

Luna-san’s shoulders drooped in disappointment.

“You’re the worst.”

My mother said in a tone cold as ice.

“You’re cruel, Brother”

Nazuna gave me a criticizing look.

“Really, Shinobu-kun is the worst.”

I spoke to the cat plush toy like it didn’t concern me.

....Obviously I was hit by my mother. It was just a light joke.

“U- Uhm, please.... do not bully Shinobu-san.”

After seeing me getting hit, Luna-san grabbed my mother's sleeve and begged meekly.

“Hoo. So you're going to defend this idiot.”

My mother looked at Luna-san with an astonished expression. Luna-san looked back at my mother with a serious face.

“You're a weird girl. For defending this idiot.”

My mother gave off a small sigh, then gave a funny smile and said.

“Fine. Do what you want. I'll give you this idiot, Luna-chan. For, let's say 100 yen?”

What a thing. Human trafficking was happening right before my eyes.

“Y- You cannot buy Shinobu-san for just 100 yen. Rather, you cannot buy him with money at all.”

Luna-san made a slightly angry face.

“Mhm~ Not with money, huh. Good, I like you. I'll give you him for free.”

My mother nodded generously and continued.

“....By the way, Luna-chan. You seem to be a foreigner. Do you have a place to stay at?”

“E- Ehm, as embarrassing as it is, I do not...”

Luna-san said vaguely.

“Then just live with us. We have an empty room. Consider it your own.

Seems our idiot has caused you some trouble. To be honest, if you were to go to the police, my son would be done for.”

That was when my mother faced me and said.

“As you can see, you belong to Luna-chan now.”

“...Even if you plead on the letter of indulgence called love, treating a person like a commodity is unforgivable—I oppose human trafficking.”

“Shut up.”

I struck a cool pose and even said some amazing phrases, but my mother ended all discussion with a hit. To be honest, wasn't this too cruel? When I hugged my knees and was shuddering from the injustice,

“U- Uhm, is it really okay? To let someone like me stay here.”

In this unbelievable situation, Luna-san was looking at my mother. My mother went with the flow and answered “Yeah. Keep an eye on this idiot so he doesn't commit any crimes” while looking at me.

“Th- Thank you very much. I will do my best. At all costs.”

Luna-san showed a happy smile, stood up and bowed down. Not that it matters, but “At all costs” sounds a bit erotic. Ufufu. I'm just no good.

But I wasn't the only one who was no good.

“...So cute.”

Without me noticing, my mother had hugged Luna-san and was patting her head. Sure, her smile was so cute that it makes you want to hug her, but a hug out of nowhere goes too far. Also, Mum, why are you extending your right arm towards Luna-san’s bottom and starting to caress it too?

I- It’s not like I’m envious or anything. Thinking that, I kept staring at them, when

“Huh. What are you staring at, Shinobu? Go to school or wherever.”

“Y- You’re so cold. I haven’t eaten my breakfast yet, you know?”

“You’ll be late, so give up on that. Geez. Nazuna was eating hers, just what were you doing?”

“Some devil was making me kneel on the ground and kept hitting me.”

“Such a cruel devil. C’mon. Leave Luna-chan to me. Hurry up and change, then get to school.”

There was a lot I wanted to say back, but I had no time. At this rate I was really going to be late.

I stood up with a sigh when I met Luna-san’s eyes.

Luna-san said “Take care of me” while lowering her head, but I didn’t answer. It wasn’t because I was embarrassed. It was just too strange. I didn’t remember anything about last night. Because I didn’t remember.... I was strangely bothered by it.

With a groan I got ready for school.

\* \* \*

On the road leading to school, soon after we left the house, Nazuna, who was besides me, said with a smile,

“Luna-san sure is pretty.”

“Yeah”

“She sent me off with a pat on my head~”

“Good for you.”

When I just gave short replies, Nazuna looked at me.

“...Brother, what are you angry about?”

And asked that.

“I’m not really angry. Just worried.”

“So philosophical.”

Mimicking me, she made a doubtful face.

I sighed thinking it must be great to be stupid.

....But to think she would let an unknown foreign girl stay with us just like that. When I headed out for school, my mother only told me “No problem”

with a bright smile, peculiar for an adult, but I couldn't see any reason in her words.

Actually, did I really shout some crazy stuff like "Gahaha! The great me desires you!" and took Luna-san home with me? I had no memories of it at all.

"By the way, Nazucat"

"Meow?"

Nazucat replied full of energy and clung to my arm. It would be better if she fixed her habit of clinging to others already, but for now I'll let it pass.

"Nazucat, when did you wake up today?"

"At 6~ I fetched the newspaper~"

"Fetching the newspaper is your job after all, Nazucat.....So, when you fetched it, was there anything strange about the front door lock? Like, was it broken? And were our shoes moved?"

"Mhm~? It was like always?"

With a happy expression, Nazuna was pressing her cheek against my arm. Mh, looks like she's telling the truth. But that eliminated all possibilities that Luna-san came to pay me, the handsome guy, a night visit. Rather, it was more logical that I brought Luna-san into my room. Both the front door lock and the lock on my window were locked. It's a mystery, Sherlock.

"....Huh? Brother, you're wearing a ring."

I was deep in thought, when Nazuna, who still had her cheek pressed onto my arm, suddenly raised a surprised voice. Then she took my left hand with a face full of curiosity and stared at the ring on my ring finger.

"Where did you get this?"

"From a weirdo."

I answered while I remembered the Albino girl Elni, who I met yesterday,.

"....Brother, did you go to grandpa's doujo?"

Nazuna made a wrong conclusion. But it was understandable. At grandpa's doujo that was three stations away from our house, were a lot of weirdoes. After all, the Vice-Instructor wore an afro. What's more, our grandfather was the Head-Instructor.



But being trained by Grandpa, who was being called the “Living Legend” by some people, makes the guys of the doujo really strong.

Since I was small I had been learning martial arts from my grandpa, but there were still people who I couldn’t beat. Even yesterday when I fought with the Afro Vice-Instructor, he told me “My Afro is actually a wig, yo!”, whereupon I dropped my guard in shock and was beaten. Even though I was so close to beating him.

“But it all turned out well, didn’t it, Brother?”

“...Mh? What did?”

Yesterday I lost to the Afro, today I had lots of trouble already in the morning. Not good at all. I took off the ring that I got from Elni yesterday from my left hand and put it on my right hand’s ring finger, thinking it might have some kind of effect, whereupon Nazuna looked at me and smiled.

“I mean, you got a girlfriend.”

It seemed Nazuna already saved Luna-san as my girlfriend in her brain.

“But, Brother, don’t become high-spirited now just because you got a girlfriend.”

It certainly didn’t feel like I had gotten a girlfriend, so I just nodded vaguely. Then Nazuna pulled on my arm and said.

“Don’t forget to play with me too, okay? I’ll run to seed if you don’t give me any attention.”

“Hey, hey, that sounds terrible. By the way, what will happen to you when you run to seed?”

“Mhm~ I’ll get picky. I won’t eat pumpkins. Also, I’ll bite you on three days of the week. And quite hard!”

“Scary. You’re scary, Nazucat. You’re extremely bad. BAD Nazucat!”

“WHO’S BAD!”

Nazuna suddenly spread both her arms menacing. While I thought that her running to seed wouldn’t pose any problems, I walked together with Nazuna on the road to school...

“Later then, Brother”

“Yeah. Don’t sleep in class.”

On the street where we parted, I stopped and briefly waved my hand at her. Nazuna then bowed slightly with a “Meow”. After I saw her running off at full speed, I resumed my walk towards school, when

“Oh”

I met a girl by chance.

Long straight and black hair. Wilful eyes. Dignified eyelashes. She was

beautiful, but gave off a strong aura. That would be best to describe her. But even her clothes couldn't hide her voluptuous breasts, firm waist and long legs that could capture any man on earth. It was Gogyou Hijiri-san. My classmate. Because of her beauty she was quite popular with the boys, but she was even more popular with the girls. A straight back, bright eyes and a smooth bridge of nose. Since she was part of the Kendo club, she was always carrying a bamboo-blade pouch in her hand, which only added to her strong appearance.

"Good morning, Nanjou-kun."

Recognising me, Gogyou-san gave me a refreshing morning greeting.

"Ah, good morning."

I also replied refreshingly. I wasn't on such good terms with her that would allow me to start up a conversation now with "I had a bullshit dream last night! Fuck!" with my middle finger erected. That's why I thought she would just greet me and then walk past me immediately, but surprisingly she got closer to me, looked at my face and said a single word.

"...Stinks."

Gogyou-san made a severe expression for some reason. For the record, I was deeply, very deeply hurt.

"I'm.... going home. I'll take a bath, put on some of my mum's perfume and come back again."

"Ah, n- no. It's not like that. I didn't mean that kind of stench, but, ehm, more of a bad vibe-like stench...."

"I'll go hang myself. I'll write in my testament that 'I was sad since Gogyou-san told me to die because of my bad smell. Please discuss that in class.'"

"N- No! You don't stink, so don't do that!"

Gogyou-san followed up in a panic.

Just stop it. I don't need any pity. One is immune to one's own smell. Without a doubt I, whose memory was vague about yesterday, produced a smell that wasn't to Gogyou-san's liking. I was sure I was stinking. But, I wished she hadn't said it so direct. I was hurt.

"Bullying isn't cool."

Mumbling that sadly I started walking away.

"Wha. N- No. Th- That wasn't what I was—Ah, wait, Nanjou-kun"

Gogyou-san quickly lined up besides me and said "You don't stink." I sped up, so that I was running now. Gogyou-san matched my pace and said "Don't worry, you don't stink" while showing me a smile. You're nice, Gogyou-san. I could understand why she was so popular.

Watching her big breasts, who swayed at each step, I felt a bit guilty.

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The moment when the chime heralded the end of the fourth period, I pulled out my lunch box, opened the lid, grabbed my chopsticks and shoved my fried side dish into my mouth while my teacher gave me a wry look with wide-open eyes. Maybe because I skipped breakfast and was quite hungry, but it tasted wonderful. So good, I was drooling.

“Uwa, you’re already eating. Class only ended seconds ago. The teacher is still here, you know? And he’s even looking at your fried stuff with sparkling eyes.”

I heard an astonished voice, so I raised my head. In front of me stood ugliness in person. Its name was Asada Kouta. Strangely enough the girls appraised him with “Just his face is nice”, but ugly suited him just fine. And this ugliness – Asada Kouta was a plain idiot.

Yes, Asada Kouta was half made out of idiocy. The other half was a sister complex. And his appearance was coated with perversion.

“Let’s eat together.”

Asada and me were buddies that have eaten together since 10th grade. Like always he put his lunchbox on my desk and opened the lid. I watched Asada, who peeked into his lunchbox and exulted “Today I got fried prawns!”, then asked.

“—So, Asada. How’s it going lately?”

“Oh? Mhm....”

“Well, not that I really care.”

After I interrupted him, he gave me the reasonable protest of “Then don’t ask!”, but I simply ignored him. What else was there to do. After all no one seeks information about a guy.

“Anyway, Asada, my story is more important.”

“Eh, so cocky....”

While complaining Asada prompted “So, what is it?”, so I answered.

“You know, Gogyou-san was—”

“How rare.”

“Huh?”

With a surprised face Asada interrupted my glory tale.

“It’s rare for you to talk about a girl.”

“Really?”

“Really. You hardly ever talk about them.”

For some reason Asada got serious and went on.

“You, who hardly ever speaks of girls, mentions Gogyou-san’s name out of the blue. That’s when I, the dandy Asada, noticed it.”

The dandy Asada, who wasn't a single shred dandy, pointed his finger sternly at me and said.

"You fell for Gogyou-san!"

"No, not at all."

When I answered him while pleasurable chewing my fried eggs, Asada's shoulders drooped for some reason.

"I was wrong, huh. A girl who can melt your frozen heart has yet to appear.... And here I was all happy to talk about a girl."

Asada, who loves girls because of his sister complex, made a sad face.

"You really don't care about girls, do you."

"Mh? My curiosity for the female body couldn't be any greater, you know?"

"That's not what I meant. Don't you want to date a girl?"

....Date, huh. It's not like I never thought about it, but there were just no opportunities, so I couldn't help it.

I didn't know why, but I hadn't fallen in love with anyone since 5th or 6th grade.

I repeatedly thought stuff like she's pretty, she's cute, she wears such a short skirt or she has such big breasts, but nothing that I would call love.

I hadn't been like that from the beginning. I had a crush...or at least I thought so. I didn't remember it clearly.

It probably wasn't such a sweet memory. I'm sure it was a memory that I didn't want to recall. I got rejected anyway or something.

"...Hey, you were just thinking about Gogyou-san, weren't you?"

While I was deep in thought, Asada came to some kind of misunderstanding and approached me with "Speaking of dating made Gogyou-san appear in your mind, right? I can tell by looking at your face. So you actually loved her after all, right?" He was a pest, so I shut him up by poking my fingers in both his eyes.

He then shouted "My eyes! My eyes!" while pressing his hands on them.

After that

"S- So what about Gogyou-san? You have some business with her or what? I hope a ruffian like you gets crushed by her."

He said something rude with a piercing tone.

"...How rude of you. You think I could be beaten up by Gogyou-san?"

"Where does that confidence come from? Don't get so arrogant just because you're strong from doing a bit of martial arts."

"Huh, don't look down on the Nanjou School of the mental moon-state water."

"I don't really get it, but it sounds strong. But Gogyou-san is quite incredible

too, you know? She's always carrying around her bamboo blade."

"Yeah, in preparation for a sudden ambush."

"No. She's in the Kendo club. She's really strong. I heard she's on a national level."

Reminds me, I overheard some stuff about her being quite successful at the Kendo club.

According to Asada, Gogyou-san has quite a few heroic tales outside the Kendo club too, like rescuing girls, who are troubled by persistent flirts, in town.

"If you wreak havoc, I'll go tell Gogyou-san and have her eliminate you."

"Shut up, bastard."

"Kyaaa, save me, Gogyou-san!"

When I raised my hand, Asada screamed in a girly voice and sought help from Gogyou-san.

Gogyou-san was in the middle of eating her lunch when she was called, yet she put away her chopsticks when she looked, stood up and elegantly came over to us.

You don't see a person, who looks beautiful just by walking, every day. Is what crossed my mind.

"You two, fighting isn't good."

Gogyou-san stood in front of us and gave a warning.

"Sorry. Asada wouldn't shut up with his 'I want to touch Gogyou-san's breasts! I want to knead them!' So I couldn't stop myself..."

I made up a lie on the spot. Asada was shocked. Gogyou-san was hiding her breasts with her arms.

"...A- Asada-kun, please don't even joke about that."

"N- No. No, no! You're wrong. It wasn't like that. I didn't say that. Nanjou made that all up. Don't believe him."

Asada was desperately making excuses to Gogyou-san, who had slightly red cheeks.

"That's crude, Asada."



“Y- You’re not helping me!? Isn’t that too cruel of you? Besides, wasn’t it you who brought up Gogyou-san! Didn’t you have some business with her?”

Asada changed the topic and I nodded with a “Hm”, then said.

“Actually, this morning Gogyou-san told me that I stink. I was a bit bothered about that. Hey, Asada, do I really stink? Katou besides me hasn’t mentioned anything.”

“Who gives a damn about that! You don’t stink at all. You’re just being hated by Gogyou-san!”

Wh- What a horrible thing to say.

“Shut up! I’m not hated! Rather, you’re being hated! Look, Gogyou-san looks all troubled!”

I shouted while pointing at Gogyou-san.

“No, you’re wrong! She doesn’t think that. She never told me I stink! Take that. She hates you~!”

Asada was behaving like kid. I was really pissed off.

“Shut up, you siscon!”

“What’s wrong with loving my sister!”

Standing up, Asada and I were shouting angrily at each other while grabbing each other’s collar.

“S- Stop fighting, you two. Please calm down.”

Gogyou-san flustered, stepped between us and put her right hand on my chest and her left hand on Asada’s chest to pacify us. The warm and soft touch of her right hand spread across my chest and a sweet fragrance arose from her.

When I looked at Asada, he had a dirty smile on his face.

Kids, don’t become like him. I cleared my throat once and sat down chilled.

“...So, let’s be serious here, I really don’t stink?”

“Be at ease, you don’t stink. Sorry, I phrased it badly.”

Gogyou-san bowed her head a little, then continued.

“Rather than a stench...It’s better to call it a presence? I feel a bad presence coming from you, Nanjou-kun....”

Bad presence? What the? Was my body emitting perverse wave motions like Asada? I was greatly annoyed and when I was about to open my mouth, “Now that you mention it, you have a strong spiritual sense, right, Gogyou-san.”

Asada said upon remembering.

“Be careful, Nanjou. What Gogyou-san says proves to be quite true. I bet you did something bad.”

“Don’t be stupid. You really think I, the perfect gentlemen, would run

around doing bad things?"

"So you say, but weren't you summoning a devil in the middle of the night with weird squeals?"

"You knew, huh."

"Uwa! He's the real deal! So that's why he looks like a devil!"

"Who looks like a devil! Obviously it was just a joke."

I said that disgusted by Asada, who believed my lie. "Okay, I get it." Asada's obvious lie in response.

....Mhm, a devil summoning, huh?

"Reminds me, as a kid I summoned a devil...."

"Eh? You too?"

For some reason Asada was impressed with an happy expression.

"Seeing that you said 'too' it means you also did it?"

"Yeah. A female demon is quite sexy, right. Craving for that sexiness, I held a devil summoning ceremony back in elementary school. After I drew a magic circle you often see in mangas, I was chanting 'A pretty girl, a pretty girl, a pretty girl' with all my might, but there was no reaction."

If there was a devil, who would react to that, it would get quite along with Asada.

"You know, Asada. If you really want to summon a devil, then just like me you need to buy a suspicious black arts book, draw a magic circle with your own blood and chant the right words. Get it?"

"...What? You're into the black arts?"

Somehow Asada had eyes full of expectations. And within it was a sexy girl.

"Don't have any weird expectations. I just told you that was back in elementary school."

"I see, too bad.... Still, you were quite the gloomy kid then. Were you plotting world domination by summoning a devil?"

"Nah, that wasn't it."

"Then you were after a sexy girl, like me?"

"Neither"

"Then what?"

"...I wonder?"

I tilted my head and pondered. Asada looked at me wearily and opened his mouth to say something, but I shut him up again by poking his eyes.

"Uhm~"

The reason why I wanted to summon a devil. I couldn't remember it at all. My memory was imperfect only on that part. When I groaned in my attempt to remember it,

“—!”

A sudden pain ran through my head.

Hey, hey, what was that. I felt some unease from the sudden pain in my head, when

“Are you okay, Nanjou-kun?”

Gogyou-san's worried face was in front of me.

“....It's nothing.”

Guess suddenly putting my hands on my forehead had him worried, as even Asada asked me “Are you okay?” with an anxious expression.

I repeated my “It's nothing” and cleared my throat once to show it.

“Good. I'll take one of Asada's side dishes.”

“Good' my ass. Geez, making us worried for nothing.”

I gave a fried egg together with a “Sorry, sorry” to the sighing Asada. That, brightened his mood and he smiled. While I was at it, I also gave Gogyou-san a fried egg. Upon that Gogyou-san said “I would feel bad for only receiving” and gave me a octopus wiener. Nothing less from her. Unlike the idiot named Asada, she naturally performed a trade of side-dishes.

After that she also preached about the dangers of summoning a demon to Asada and me. Like that we shouldn't attempt it since the risk is too high.

She was really worried. Her face showed a serious expression.

She's a good girl after all, that Gogyou-san.

That's what I thought when I pulled Asada's ear, whose gaze was locked on Gogyou-san's breasts.

\* \* \*

People called me the ace of the Going-Home club.

The instant last homeroom ended, I rushed out of the classroom faster than anyone and hurried home.

I had suddenly realised.

That Luna-san surely was a marriage-swindler.

Most likely, Luna-san's plan was to deceive me, an innocent boy, with her erotic body. And her meek attitude was to coax my family, so that she could easily get her hands on the money. Geez, what a shameless girl. That was unforgivable to me.

“I won't be fooled.”

I arrived home, opened the front door without any noise, erased my presence and sneaked into the house. I thought I would find the swindler Luna-san rifling through the cupboards, but that wasn't the case. No one was in the living room. Then, where did Luna-san go?

I tilted my head, when I heard a sound from the back of the living room, the dining kitchen.

“...Over there, huh.”

I mumbled silently, put down my bag slowly and moved towards the back of the living room. Through the gap in the sliding accordion curtain I peeped into the kitchen. I saw my mother and Luna-san standing there. That's when I bent down, crawled towards the two and hid under the table. Then I raised my head and spied at the two of them....I could only see their bottoms.

Or rather, I was only looking at their bottoms. Mainly because they were wearing tight jeans. The shape of Luna-san's bottom was clearly visible even through the clothes.

The round bottom with a firm tension upwards was truly what you would call a beautiful ass. My head was filled with its roundness. Those are surely my mother's jeans, which created this fantastic phenomena.

Yeah, great jeans. Fantastic. Like a painting. Paradise in front of my eyes. Falling prey to my desire, I gazed at the soft shape of their perfectly round bottoms, when

“Kyaa”

Suddenly a cute scream sounded and the fantastic bottom rocked.

I- It's moving! My eyes shot open wide.

“H- Hey, Luna-chan, what are you doing? Are you okay? Sure, I told you to press the switch, but if you leave your hand there you'll get burned.”

“I am sorry. I am sorry.”

Luna-san stepped back a step and was bowing her head wildly. Since she was moving so wildly, her nice bottom shook accordingly.

“C'mon, put your hand under cold water already. I'll take over for you.”

“Th- This much is nothing.”

“Just cool it.”

Luna-san became dejected upon my mother's words.

When I finally managed to get my eyes off their bottoms and covertly checked the situation. Luna-san gave way to my mother as her shoulders drooped, went to the sink, stared at the water tap lever and then precariously pushed the lever.

By doing that she must had rotated the spout. Water flowed out like in a shower.

Upon seeing that Luna-san said

“Wawah, I.. I broke it!”

in a panicked voice.

Seeing that scene, my mother looked surprised, but broke out in laughter

then. While still laughing, she rotated the spout back into its original position. Luna-san's cheeks were painted red.

"You're funny, Luna-chan."

My mother said that and continued cooking. For a while I was observing Luna-san. It was quite funny. Seeing her movements with the kitchen knife, I could tell she was no amateur, but for some reason she was frightened by the gas oven and scared by the refrigerator.

Maybe she was some rich lady, is what crossed my mind---No, that's not it. I shook my head. That was just an act. Surely an act to coax my mother. I cannot be fooled.

"...But somehow she's trying her best."

The profile of a hardworking person was fantastic. The profile of my mother was malicious.

Swaying breasts were fantastic. The smile of my mother was malicious. I was watching Luna-san standing in the kitchen for a while, but thinking that I would get deceived at this rate, I hurried to my room and laid down on the bed.

"...Was that really an act?"

I remembered Luna-san's serious and frowning expression. At the same time I remembered her swaying breasts and rocking bottom.

For a while I was lost in groaning. Hm. Hm. Shinomun. Hm. Hm.

I was drawn to something. My heart felt restless. I was about to remember something, but I couldn't. A feeling like a small bone was stuck in my throat. Then again the pain in my head. What's more I was overflowing with some incomprehensible impatience. I had no clue what was going on anymore. Maybe this impatience is a warning from my instincts? Maybe my instincts were trying to tell me that Luna-san was dangerous. You couldn't underestimate a person's sixth sense.

That's why I decided to trust my instincts.

No one else would trust it, so only I will trust in it.

Luna-san surely was a marriage-swindler.

Yeah. I cannot be fooled. I can't be fooled by her beautiful face, her fantastic breasts and nice ass. I stood up with a "Hm". While leisurely doing push-ups, I vowed in my heart.

That I would expose Luna-san's real character.

Then I would ask her. Why she came to me. If she was after my body. Or if she was after our money. I wouldn't forgive the latter. As for the former.... An illicit delusion spread in my head.

"Not good, not good."

As to shake off my delusion, I concentrated on my push-ups.  
—By the way, dinner was my favourite Mapo doufu.  
It seems Luna-san cooked it.  
It was delicious. I was nearly fooled there.

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## Chapter 02: Welcome back, Moon

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She hated that smile.

She laid down for a moment, bit her lip and tightly clenched her fists. The girl forced herself to look up and smile. Her eyes were withholding something. Her mouth was tightly shut. Both her fists were shaking.

—Even now, on the verge of tears, the girl was smiling.

How many times she's made that smile.

How many times she's continued to smile while holding back the tears.

How many times she's cried all alone.

The girl never cried in front of others. When she cried, it was always when she was alone.

The girl knew that even if she cried, nobody would help her....

While crying, she recited.

Hey God, where are you?

Hey God, are you watching me?

Hey God, do you...love me?

There was no one to answer her prayer. Still, the girl continued to pray. She continued to believe. She continued to recite.

God, I believe in you. I believe that you are watching over me.

—That's why, I won't cry anymore.

Declared the girl, with a smile. She forced herself to smile with a sad expression.

Aww, why wouldn't anyone look at the girl.

The girl was always crying all alone. For a long time, she's been crying all alone.

I wanted to protect her. I didn't want to see her that sad again.

That's why I reached out my hand. To save her, to protect her.

—That was a dream. A cloudy dream that faded away as soon as I woke up.

When I got up and noticed that I had my fists clenched, I had already forgotten about it.

I welcomed the morning with a headache. Why were my cheeks wet? I didn't know why anymore.

\*\*\*

Delicious. A taste that stimulated your appetite. An exquisite flavour with simple seasoning, yet remained in your mouth without making you sick of it.

I sipped that soup mouthful after mouthful and before I noticed it, the bowl was already empty.

“...Uhm, Shinobu-san, how does it taste?”

I looked at the origin of the voice. There was Luna-san fidgeting and waiting for my answer.

I would have liked to honestly say it was good, but I couldn't do that. Luna-san was a swindler. I couldn't be fooled by a swindler. I wouldn't be fooled!

“More soup!”

I gave Luna-san my empty bowl.

Upon that, Luna-san energetically replied with a “Sure”, took the bowl with both her hands and headed into the kitchen. With a smile on her face that was saying “I was praised~” she stood in the kitchen, and scooped soup from the pot with the ladle in her hand....Damn. I ended up pleasing her. Full of regret I looked down at the table.

Luna-san's cooked food was lined up on the table. Colourful sandwiches, a salad and soup.

—Today was Saturday. The day I eat lunch at home.

Because I said that I wanted to eat sandwiches, Luna-san made them.

But it sure was a surprise. Until just recently, Luna-san was scared of the gas oven and was talking to the refrigerator or microwave, but she now had improved a lot.

Just as I thought that she must have worked hard in the kitchen with my mother every day,

“Hey, she specially made it for you, so at least say it's delicious.”

Sitting to my right, my mother told me off with a weary face.

By the way, beside me Nazuna was happily stuffing herself with a sandwich.

“Luna-san gave it her best to make these.”

“Really. Then I'll also give my best by eating them.”

I answered while grabbing a sandwich, when my mother let out a sigh.

“...Shinobu, listen.”

My mother bent forwards and waved her hand. Wondering what's up, I also bent towards her. My mother put her face close to mine and said in a small voice.

“You know, Luna-chan isn't showing it, but she burned herself a few times when she cooked this.”

“....Really?”

“Yes. Because a certain someone said ‘I really want to eat sandwiches. I’m really craving for some soup!’ Luna-chan was really enthusiastic....”

“...I, I see.”

My mother lightly poked my forehead, then slipped back into her chair.

“A secret?”

She must have seen me and my mother. Luna-san asked that with her head tilted when she brought my refill of the soup. I just nodded vaguely and sneaked a peek at Luna-san’s hand. Like my mother had said, she had burns. Her slender long fingers were covered in bandages.

Seems like she still can’t get along with the gas oven.

Despite that she still gave it her best...

“Here, Shinobu-san.”

Luna-san handed me the refilled bowl with a smile.

“....Thanks. It... It’s delicious, this soup.”

I mumbled silently while looking the other way.

“Really? Thank you.”

She replied happily. Intrigued I looked back. Luna-san’s cheek were slightly red and accompanied by a big smile. For a moment, I was captured by that smile, so I averted my gaze in a rush.

“...What? Don’t tell me you’re feeling ashamed?”

My mother had bent over again and was looking happily at my face with a grin. She then poked my cheeks, teasing me.

“St- Stop it. Don’t touch the cheeks of the exalted me so casually.”

“Oh my, how cheeky. That’s the reason you have so few friends.”

Uhh, I felt a sharp pain in my chest.

“...Wh- What’s that out of the blue, Mum. Don’t slander me without any proof.”

“Proof, huh...But you don’t have any friends.”

Stabbing my heart with a knife, my mother said wearily.

“I think it was around elementary school? When you suddenly declared ‘I’ll become strong’, shut yourself in my father-in-law’s doujo and just trained your body without playing with anyone....As a result, you’re now a lonely guy without a girlfriend, let alone friends. Reminds me, in middle school you were saying books were your friends, right”

“Stop it, Mum. I don’t want to hear such a sad story now.”

“There you go again. That’s why you aren’t popular.”

Aw, damn. Something sparkled in my eyes...

It just got too painful, so I sought help from Nazuna, but she was still immersed in her sandwich. She was never helpful at crucial times.

“E- Ehm, Shinobu-san is not popular with girls?”  
Luna-san asked that with a slightly surprised voice.  
Towards Luna-san’s question, my mother  
“Yes, not popular at all.”  
cruelly confirmed.

“Eh? Is that so? Even though he is handsome....”  
Luna-san said such a wonderful thing, but my mother blinked and said.  
“Th- This idiot and handsome? This guy who’s so sadly unpopular?”  
Hearing my mother’s word, Luna-san frowned.  
“Sh- Shinobu-san IS handsome. The other girls just have no eyes for men!”  
I didn’t know what was going on, but for a change, Luna-san got angry.  
That also surprised my mother.  
Nazuna was still focused on her sandwich.

\* \* \*

“The cat~ is strong~ and cool~”

Nazuna was singing a weird song while washing the dishes. Wearing a cat apron and happily humming ‘Meow, meow’ Nazuna didn’t notice at all that I wasn’t working on the dishes.

After being ordered by our mother to wash the dishes, Nazuna and I were standing in the kitchen like this, but.... I was bothered by something.  
It was Luna-san. She had gotten used to electronic devices, so she was put in charge of vacuuming by my mother today. When my mother handed her the vacuum cleaner, Luna-san said “I know this! It is Mr. Vacuum cleaner!” with sparkling eyes.

First I had a bitter smile when I imagined Luna-san having a hard time with the vacuum cleaner, but I suddenly realised:

Luna-san was a swindler. A swindler was cleaning. Under the cover of cleaning, she would open the cupboards and get her hands on the bank book.

Not good. I left Nazuna, who was giving it her best at washing the dishes, and moved to the dining room by crawling under the table for no reason. Then I opened the accordion curtain silently and peeped into the living room.

I hadn’t heard the vacuum cleaner for a while now. I was sure Luna-san was going through the cupboards right now. Believing it was my chance to catch the swindler red-handed, I peeped into the living room—I nearly face-palmed upon seeing the scene within.

“...Uh- Uhm, why are you not moving? Did I do something to offend you? I

beg you, please move. I really need to clean. So... please!"

Luna-san was frantically bowing to the vacuum cleaner and begging it to move.

....Luna-sensei, you haven't plugged it into the electrical outlet. Without that, the vacuum cleaner "Scorpion Itou" won't move. Please notice that already.

When I was praying "Notice it" from the dining room, after a while Luna-san finally noticed the reason the vacuum cleaner wasn't moving. Saying "I am sorry" with a bow, she plugged the cable of the vacuum cleaner into the outlet on the wall and turned the power on while looking at the suction drain in excitement.

Aw, damn it.

I thought I was going to catch the swindler red-handed, but was totally disappointed.

It's not like I wanted to see Luna-san desperately apologising "I am sorry, I am sorry." for having her hair sucked by the vacuum cleaner.

Actually, she was really bad with machines.

She was really messed around by "Scorpion Itou", which was loudly causing havoc.

After her hair, her T-shirt was sucked in and Luna-san screamed "Kyaa". Her clothes rolled up and pure white skin, a narrow waist and small navel caught my eyes.

Because it was quite an expensive vacuum cleaner, it had incredible suction power. It completely ignored Luna-san, who was pulling on the hose with an apologetic voice crying "P- Please save me~", and strongly sucked on her T-shirt. Her T-short rolled up more and more, and her breasts started to be exposed to my view.

Apparently Luna-san wasn't wearing a bra.

Her shirt got rolled up even more and her wonderful underboobs became visible.



Her T-shirt, rolled up steadily towards the center of her chest, which excited me because it was going to reveal everything. That's wasn't all. Luna-san's desperate action of resistance made her breasts sway around. For a while Luna-san was fighting like that, but then succeeded in shutting down the vacuum cleaner by chance. Luna-san let out a big sigh of relief and grabbed the vacuum cleaner. She had a strangely serious expression and was exerting quite a lot of force into the hand that was holding the vacuum cleaner. After that she cleaned the living room with cautious movements and a stiff expression, while talking to the vacuum cleaner from time to time.

The scene was so bizarre that I forgot that I had left Nazuna alone with the dish-washing and just watched over the cleaning Luna-san with a smile. Then,

“Wawah! Brother is gone! But he was beside me just before!”

I could hear Nazuna's surprised voice from behind me when she finally noticed that I was gone. When I turned around, Nazuna was looking around panicked with a sad expression, so I quickly opened the accordion curtain and hid myself in the living room. By doing that, Luna-san noticed me, stopped the vacuum cleaner and was about to say something, when I stopped her by making a “Ssh” sound while putting a finger in front of my mouth.

Luna-san gave me a questioning look, but smiled soon enough, resumed vacuuming and moved from the living room to the hallway.

“H- Huh? Brother, where are you~?”

I could hear Nazuna's sad voice, so I stood up, combed back my hair with both my hands and raised my collar. I opened the curtain in a flash and shouted.

“A hero always comes late! Shinomun makes his entrance!”

I just wanted to fool around a bit, but

“Wah~ It's Shinomun! Shinomun came to our house!”

Nazuna had turned around on my words and was clapping her hands in awe for some reason.

Reminds me, when I played with Nazuna as Shinomun in the past, she was always really happy....

“Shinomun! Shinomun!”

Nazuna was calling for me happily.

Hm, might as well continue for a bit.

“Nazucat. I'm here now, so be at ease! Leave the dishes to me!”

“I'll also help!”

I tucked up my sleeves and stepped towards the sink. Beside me, Nazuna was full of motivation.

Since I ditched her before, I had planned to do the rest myself....Oh well, she seemed to enjoy it.

“Hey, Nazucat. The kitchen-knife is dangerous. Leave it to me.”

“Even I know how to use a kitchen-knife, okay?”

“...So you say, but you still cut your fingers quite often.”

“I... I’m still practicing!”

While I gave the pouting Nazuna just a general “Haha”, I washed the kitchen-knife.

“Yop.”

I swept the water from the kitchen-knife.

“Wah, Shinomun, so cool. Just like a blood-swing.”

A blood-swing being the swing of your sword to get rid of the blood. Though the real thing wa more complicated... Well, she told me I’m cool, so I’m quite pleased.

“Hah! Hah!”

Becoming conceited, I took a stance like a soldier, rotating the knife into a reverse grip and although doing it so fast was quite thrilling, the movement itself was nothing special.

“B- Brother, so cool! But it’s dangerous.”

“Oh, right. Sorry, sorry.”

Nazuna had forgotten about Shinomun and was making a worried expression. I quickly stopped my hand, when

—CUT

Mh? Cut? Having a nasty feeling, I looked down. I had cut myself. Red blood was gushing out from my wrist with a \*spurt\*.

“Oh, it’s making \*spurt\*~”

There was a pain, but I just had a shallow cut in my skin. It didn’t cut a nerve or muscle. It looked worse than it was. Just a light wound. The bleeding should stop soon too.

After I realised that, I tried to put on a carefree smile, but it was different for Nazuna.

“Uwaaaa! B- Brother’s going to dieeee!”

“Hey, hey. Just how weak do you think I am? I won’t die because of something like this.”

I announced to the crying Nazuna, but probably out of anxiety she ran out shouting “Muuum~~!”. I ignored Nazuna and pressed on my wrist to stop the blood.... whereupon suddenly an “Awawa” and footsteps drew closer to

me.

“Sh- Shinobu-san! Are you okay? Do not die!”

A pale Luna-san and a \*hichic\* crying Nazuna came rushing in from the living room.

“...Hey, Nazucat. What did you tell Luna-san?”

“T- To help you...s- since you’re dying....”

“Don’t make such a big deal out it. And stop crying.”

“Geez! It IS a big deal! Blood is coming out! A catastrophe!”

For some reason Nazuna got angry.

“You hurt yourself, Shinobu-san?”

The anxious Luna-san was inspecting my body and noticed the bleeding from my wrist.

“C- Ca- Catastrophe!”

She made a sad face like Nazuna, approached me and took my arm. Then,

“....Mm. \*kiss\*”

She softly kissed my wound.

The sweet sensation of her soft lips made my heart skip a few beats.

“N- No, you don’t have to do this. It’s dirty.”

“It is not dirty!”

Sh- She got angry. Certainly, it’s said that saliva is effective for stopping bleeding... but it was too embarrassing. I tried to quickly pull back my hand, but Luna-san had a firm grip on my arm with her right hand and wouldn’t let go.

“It’s not that deep, so no worries.”

“whont du”

Luna-san said, while looking up at me, her lips pressed against my wrist.

Seemed like she was really worried. She looked at me with a slightly angry face.

“Mm. Mm.”

When she looked at me like that, I couldn’t oppose her anymore....but it was still embarrassing.

Because Luna-san was quite close to me, her soft, blonde hair grazed my body and there was even a sweet fragrance. Furthermore her breath was tickling my chest and there was an indescribable sensation from her warm lips and tongue.

—SUCK. Her lips moved as she sucked and pecked at my wrist, then Luna-san extended her tongue and carefully licked my wound gently. Whenever her pretty, pink tongue went over my wound, I felt a slight pain, but even more than that it was hot. For some reason, my body had been hot since

earlier.

Luna-san continued licking me with a serious expression....It was quite erotic.

I got strangely excited.

Upon becoming aware of it, it was too late. The moment Luna-san brushed away her hair that stuck to her face with her left hand and a "Mm", my heart went into a panic with "Holy cow!".

"It already stopped bleeding."

I forcefully pulled my arm back and looked at my wrist. The bleeding had stopped completely.

"See, I'm all fine now."

I stretched out my arm.

"I am glad."



Luna-san gasped in relief.

“Honestly, be more careful, Brother.”

Nazuna also gasped in relief with teary eyes.

....For some reason, I got all shy and automatically looked aside.

“Shinobu-san,”

I faced towards the voice.

“That was not good. Please be more careful from now on.”

Luna-san softly touched my cheek with her right hand.

A warm and soft sensation spread and heated up my cheek.

“Sorry.”

When I apologised honestly, Luna-san gave me a soft smile.

Her gentle smile was just so beautiful that I got captured inadvertently.

A smile mellow as the moon. Like it enveloped you, like it melted your heart....Such a smile.

—Nostalgia. Suddenly I was befallen by such a mysterious emotion.

I wondered. A peaceful smile. The warmth of a hand. Emerald green eyes.

Have I met Luna-san before....?

That day, the morning when Luna-san was sleeping in my bed. Luna-san asked me “Have you forgotten?”, but that wasn’t referring to the night before.... but further in the past?

A sharp pain went through my head.

I was about to remember something, but I couldn’t. Every time I tried to remember it, the pain in my head would get more intense.

“Shinobu-san? Are you okay? Does your hand hurt?”

“No, it’s nothing.”

I covered my face with my left hand and waited for the pain to subside.

I was sure I had forgotten something. I felt I had.

“...Are you really okay?”

Luna-san’s eyes suddenly entered my vision. Her clear and gentle green eyes were looking at me, worried.

....Geez. I made a big sigh in my mind.

Something was wrong with me. For thinking that this person, who was this worried about my well-being, would be a swindler....Something was clearly wrong with me.

While I watched Luna-san putting a bandage on my wound, I wondered.

Just who was Luna-san.

I wanted to know. If I had forgotten, I wanted to remember.

\* \* \*

The next day, I was sitting on the sofa in the living room, staring blankly at the ceiling. Since then, I'd tried to remember Luna-san, but it was no good at all. I also asked her herself "Have we met before?", but she just brushed it away with a "It is a secret" and a vague smile.

But I couldn't get it off my mind. Who was Luna-san and what relationship did she have with me?

Did we exchange a marriage vow in our childhood? Mhm~ But then it would be strange for Luna-san to call herself my "slave"....

Mhm~ Then maybe I grandly saved her, as she was bullied for being a foreigner, in my childhood and said something like "Girl, I'll make you my slave. Follow me. Gahaha!". I was scared of how I couldn't deny that possibility.

"Mmmuh~ Shinomun~ Full moon~"

Crossing my arms and leaning into the sofa, I mumbled and tried to remember, whereupon

"Shinobu-san."

I was suddenly called from the side, so I took my gaze off the ceiling and looked into the eyes of the voice's owner.

"Mh? Ah, Luna-san."

There stood the blonde beauty Luna-san with her dynamite body.

"What's up? Need something?"

"Ah, yes. Eh- Ehm, I have a favour to ask of you, Shinobu-san..."

A favour? How rare. It was the first time Luna-san said something like this.

"Well, first sit down."

"Yes."

Luna-san bent her knees where she stood and kneeled down on the floor.

"No, we have a sofa, so sit on that?"

When I lightly tapped the sofa, Luna-san's eyes sparkled happily and she sat besides me.

U- Uhm. Sure, I tapped the sofa there, but I didn't really mean right besides me.

I thought for sure she would sit down across from me, so I was a bit surprised....Well, she seemed happy that way, so why not.

Luna-san was staring at me intently while smiling.

Her long double eyelashes, her gentle eyes and her light, pink coloured lips captured me. As I thought that she had a pretty face, like usual, Luna-san's small lips moved.

"Shinobu-san, my favour..."

For some reason she started to blush and stammer, but then she found her

courage and said.

“U- Uhm, Shinobu-san. You call me ‘Luna-san’, right?”

“Yeah, that’s right.”

“I want you, w- well....I want you to call me ‘Luna’.”

I answered the red Luna-san immediately.

“Noo~”

“A- An instant answer! And it was somewhat sexy. Shinobu-san, please think about it at least for a bit.”

“Nah, Shinomun is embarrassed.”

“D- Don’t say that.... Ehm, would just once not be acceptable either?”

“Forcing the already embarrassed me to say such a thing—Luna-san, you perv!”

I said it to tease her, but she turned bright red.

“...I do not mind being a perv. Please call me that.”

She said that while looking up at me, so I was puzzled.

That reaction was outside of my expectations.

“W- Well, if you insist so much, for now I’ll refer to you like that in my mind.”

“There is no point in that~ Why will you not do it?”

“You’re so persistent. If you keep being so selfish I’ll add another ‘san’ and call you ‘Luna-san-san’. You won’t know anymore, if it’s supposed to be Moon or Sun.”

I surlily replied, since I was embarrassed.

“....Shinobu-san you meanie.”

Luna-san—No, I was going to call her Luna in my mind— Luna’s eyes got teary and she let out a sad “Funyuu”.

That was somewhat cute. It made me want to tease her even more and pat her head. Just when such an odd feeling befell me,

“Hey, what are you teasing Luna-chan for?”

She must have heard it all. I faced the voice and there stood my mother with an upset face.

“You can at least call her by her name.”

“Shutup, idiot.”

No one called for her, so I shooed her away with a \*hushhush\*. Probably angry from being called an “idiot” my mother drove her knee into my face. It really hurt.

“Geez, you really are an idiot. Something wrong with your eyes? Go get them checked. While you’re at it go shopping for some groceries too. Right now. If you decline, you’ll see hell.”

I had suffered enough already today. I had no choice but to obey.

“Fine. What do you need? Crab? Crab, right? Say it’s crab!”

“...If you don’t shut up, I’ll treat your arm as a crab and break it.”

My mother gave me a glare, then looked over at Luna.

“Luna-chan, would you go with Shinobu? If I let that idiot go alone, he’ll just buy pointless stuff. So please keep an eye on him.”

“Will that be alright?”

Luna gave me a quick glance.

“Sure, sure. Get him to show you around town too. I’m sure there will be plenty of chances for you to go shopping from now on. It’s a good opportunity. No objections, right Shinobu?”

“Huh. You think you can just order me around?”

For no reason, I acted all high and mighty.

“You want the great me to be a guide? This noble and titled me? Honestly, you sure don’t see my value...Oh well, I have some time to spare anyway. Then let us proceed with haste. Go prepare at once. Or do you plan to make me wait?”

“....Shinobu-san, you are acting like the prince I saw on TV before.”

“Oh? You could tell? How was it?”

“Perfect! Great!”

“Fufu. Don’t praise me so much. Okay, Luna! Prepare for departure at once! Snacks will be up to 300 yen!”

When I swung my invisible fan and ordered “Go!”, Luna nodded a “Yes!” and happily left the living room. Most likely she went to her room to get dressed.... But she definitely hadn’t noticed that I called her Luna just now. Well it was a hilarious scene.

“....Luna-chan seemed happy.”

“I wonder why?”

“Isn’t it because she gets to go out with you?”

I gave my mother a “Huh” and tilted my head. Doing that made my mother let out a big sigh.

“Insensible.”

“S.e.n.s.i.b.l.e~”

I jokingly replied with the contrary, to which my mother dropped into the sofa with an “Idiot” and a small smile. Then she stared at me.

“Mh? What?”

“Nah, I was just a bit relieved.”

“...Relieved?”

I once again tilted my head. My mother gave me a jolly smile and said.

“Until recently, you thought of Luna-chan as a swindler, right?”

It was just like she said, so I couldn’t say anything back.

“So stupid. Even if she were to swindle someone like you, there wouldn’t be any great money to gain from it.”

“No, you know, she was going to coax the family, you know, then take our bank book, you know....”

I was making excuses. My mother assured me resolute.

“She wouldn’t do something like that.”

“....What makes you think that?”

My mother replied with a “Let’s see.” while looking up at the ceiling.

“I guess it’s because I have seen lots of different people so far.”

“Different people?”

“Yeah. Through your dad’s work, I have met a lot of people. I have met offenders and those that were involved in crimes. I guess that’s why I can tell somehow. Luna-chan is a good girl. She won’t do anything bad.”

“...Even if that’s true, we can’t let her stay here forever, can we? Luna has a family too.”

“That’s why I’m leaving that to you. She isn’t a bad girl, but somehow she seems to have something going on. Besides. you don’t find a girl that’s bad with machines very often. I’m sure she has her reasons. So you go and hear her out.”

“Why me?”

When I asked that, my mother teasingly poked my cheek and said.

“Because she trusts you the most. Way more than me or Nazuna. Do you know what kind of face she makes when she looks at you? A really gentle face.”

Not like I hadn’t noticed. Her soft smile appeared in my head.

“It’s only polite to respond to kindness with kindness, no?”

“...I get it.”

When I nodded, my mother patted my head with a “Good boy”. It was embarrassing, so I wished she would stop it.

“But I wonder if we can really trust your evaluation, Mum.”

I cleared my throat and tried to change the topic, whereupon

“Don’t worry. I have an eye for people.”

“I wonder.”

When I shook my head, my mother looked to the side and then

“....Nanjou Shinobu is a good guy.”

She said softly.

“Wh- What are you saying.”

“You’re getting red.”

“Shut up, idiot. Don’t make a needlessly pretty face and go away.”

Geez. she was only ever praising me when I wasn’t expecting it.

I looked away from my mother and just stood up from the sofa, when Luna, who finished her preparations, came back. Then she made a strange expression after looking at me and my mother’s faces and said.

“Shinobu-san, Tomoe-san, your faces are red...What happened?”

My mother said nothing and just went back to her own room. I just said “Let’s go” and headed for the front door.

\* \* \*

Turning around. Turning around. Turning around.

When I walked on the street, people kept turning around. That’s because I was an eye-catching pretty boy—Is what I would like to say, but sadly that was not the case. Nearly all of those that turned around were guys. Some were women too with their cheeks flushed; spellbound, but no one was looking at me.

All the glances were directed at Luna, who was walking one step behind me. She wore a rough outfit consisting of jeans and a shirt, but since the shirt was mine, the size didn’t fit and the sleeves were rolled up. The jeans seemed to be from my mother, but while it was a bit loose around the waist, her bottom appeared slightly cramped.

Even without that getup, Luna was attracting people. She was a walking gallery. People’s gazes filled with jealousy were piercing me, so I felt annoyed, but...there was something else bothering me more. I turned around and looked at Luna, one step behind me.

“What is the matter? Ah, is it the bag?”

She must had thought I was tired. She looked at the bag from the supermarket hanging on my arm, then extended her right hand. But carrying the bag was my job, since I wan’t doing any cooking. I stopped Luna’s extending hand and asked about what was bothering me.

“Hey, why are you walking behind me? Just walk besides me.”

For some reason Luna had been walking one step behind me without ever lining up besides me.

Maybe she was going to enact the idiom “follow in someone’s footsteps” literally. But that one step would gradually widen into two, then three steps. How was I supposed to talk with her like that.

“Come on.”

When I beckoned her, she lined up besides me with a happy smile. She was

looking at me with her smile. It was embarrassing, so I raised the supermarket bag in front of my face to hide it. Then Luna said “I... I cannot see your face.” and stood on her toes.

She was quite funny. Walking with that in mind, a park appeared in my vision. It was the Midorikawa Park. Just like the name said, it had greenery (midori) and a river (kawa). It was a famous dating spot.

“Shall we drop-by there?”

I thought Luna must have been tired too from walking around. With the idea of taking a break, I pointed towards the park. Luna smiling, nodded with a “Yes”. For some reason, she seemed a bit happy.

I couldn’t deduce why, but who cares as long as she was enjoying it. We entered the park and headed for the back of the park while watching the playing children when—we could hear loud crying.

Curious about if something sad had happened, I turned around. A little girl was crying with her mouth wide open while hugging her bear plush toy. I thought she might have gotten separated from her parents, but “Honestly, stop being so wilful. We’re going home.”

The woman scolding her with a fierce tone must have been her mother. When the girl was shaking her head with a “No, no”, the mother frowned. “I don’t need such a selfish daughter.”

She turned around and slowly walked away, leaving the girl behind. The girl continued to cry, but she surely loved her mother. So as her mother got further away from her, she started to feel insecure, then shouted “Mummy” and started running after her mother quickly. But on her way she tripped over something.

“Ah”

I heard a worried voice besides me and when I looked aside, Luna was watching the girl with a worried expression.

“Fueeh”

I could hear crying again, so I shifted my gaze back. The girl had grazed her knee. She was crying heavily.

“Mummy, it hurts.”

The first to react to the girl’s crying was her mother.

The mother looked at her daughter and rushed to her side. With an “Are you okay?” she hugged her. The girl cried for a while, but the patting of her mother must have calmed her, as she stopped crying and clung to her mother.

In the end, the little girl went home hand in hand with her mother.

“I am glad”

When I looked beside me, Luna was gasping in relief.  
But her eyes looking at the girl were somewhat envious.  
—She isn't a bad girl, but somehow she seems to have something going on.  
Suddenly I remembered my mother's words.  
"You were watching her really attentively."  
"Eh? Ah, yes. Somehow, I got worried."  
Luna vaguely smiled when I talked to her.  
....After a short silence,  
"What about you?"  
"Come again?"  
I asked Luna, who tilted her head.  
"You have parents too, right? Don't you need to contact them?"  
"It is okay."  
"No, I don't think it's okay at all. Aren't your parents worried?"  
When I asked that, Luna lightly shook her head and said.  
"If they were worried... I would.... be really happy...."  
What did she mean? Before I could ask, Luna answered.  
"...I was...abandoned... by my mother."  
A strong wind blew. The wind made Luna's bangs sway.  
"But I do not remember it clearly, since I was still small back then."  
Saying that, Luna smiled.  
Just for a moment she looked down, bit her lip and clenched her fist tightly, then she raised her head and forced a smile. Her eyes were withholding something. Her tightly-shut mouth. Her shaking fists.  
With a face that was on the verge of tears, Luna smiled.  
Upon seeing that smile, my chest tightened and started to hurt.  
I couldn't say anything. I didn't know what to say. I didn't know what to do.  
Still, I had an intuition.  
"Let's go."  
I extended my hand and grabbed Luna's left hand, when---  
"Eh?"  
I was surprised. For a moment I didn't understand what had happened.  
....My hand was shaken off.  
Luna had repelled my extended hand. But what I was even more surprised about was,  
"U- Uhm, I am sorry.... Take this one please."  
She held her left hand against her chest and extended her right one.  
I wonder why she didn't want me to touch her left hand.  
Without saying anything I once again extended my hand and grabbed

Luna's left hand at the wrist. Luna showed signs of uneasiness, but said nothing and just hanged her head. She must have given up.

When Luna had brushed my hand away, I'd caught a glimpse of something for a moment.

Silently I took Luna's left hand. It had small and tender fingers. A soft touch and a warm body temperature. But when I moved my glance from the back of the hand to her palm, I clenched my teeth.

—It had a cross wound. A really deep scar. I fear it was caused by a person. On Luna's left palm was spread a big cross-shaped scar.

She must have thought I would hate such a hand.

Now that I looked back on it, whenever Luna touched someone, she always used her right hand.

“U- Uhm, I am sorry.”

Why was she apologising. There was no need to. She hadn't done anything wrong.

“Let's go.”

I enveloped Luna's left hand and started walking swiftly.

“Sh- Shinobu-san?”

I walked pulling her after me. Like before, I didn't know what to say, but I just spoke my mind.

“Your hand is warm.”

Upon firmly gripping her hand, I felt the tension leave Luna's body. She was following behind me without resistance. We approached the back of the park with a gasp of relief, when a small river came into sight.

There were benches set up near the river and couples were happily chatting on them. We also sat down on a bench and watched the transparent, sparkling river for a while.

“....Hey.”

I slowly started speaking to Luna, who had remained slumped and silent.

“...You don't have to force yourself to smile, okay?”

Luna raised her head and I continued.

“When you're sad, just say so. I think it's okay to cry when you want to.”

“...I wonder about that.”

While looking at me firmly, Luna asked.

“If I did that... If I cried... would I not be causing trouble?”

Crying causes trouble. Since when had she formed that opinion?

—I was abandoned by my mother.

Her earlier words echoed in my head.... My chest heated up.

Ah, I see. She wasn't allowed to cry. No one helped her even if she cried. No

one comforted her even if she cried.

—If I cried, would I not be causing trouble?

Was she scolded when she cried? Was she yelled at when she cried? Was she hit when she cried?

The cross wound flashed in my mind.

“None of us would think of it as trouble.”

Yeah, none of us.

“So, just tell us if something happened. All I may be able to do for you is listen....But if you talk to me, I might be able to help you.”

“...Is that okay?”

Luna asked shyly.

I wonder why, but I thought she was like a kid. I remember the crying girl from earlier.

“It’s okay.”

I gently reached out my hand.

I was bad at expressing my feelings. I didn’t know what to say.

So to make her understand, I patted her head gently, to transmit my feelings.

Upon that, Luna bit her lip, then looked down and grabbed my sleeve firmly with her left hand and with trembling shoulders. Her left hand was shaking. Until her trembling stopped, I kept patting her head.

\* \* \*

Weak in the knees. In front of the front door. I hesitated to open the door. Behind me stood Luna with her head hanged in sadness. Her eyes had been wet the whole time and even now it looked like tears would roll out at anytime. Probably the reason why there hadn’t been any conversation so far. It had been like that since we left the park.

The stupid me couldn’t think of any comforting words, so I repeated lame jokes, but I couldn’t make Luna smile.

Judging by that, I figured she would cry all alone in her room, so I was against entering the house... But I couldn’t stand in front of the door forever either. I let go of Luna’s hand and reached out for the door knob.

“Aw.”

A sad voice from behind me.

When I turned around, Luna stared at my right hand with regret, having let go of her hand.

“I’ll play some thumb wrestling or something with you later.”

In my left hand was the supermarket bag, so there was nothing I could do.

I opened the door with my free right hand and went inside the house.  
“We’re home, imbeciles!”

I was trying to be funny, but there was no reaction from Luna. She just stared at my right hand. Seems like I will really have to play thumb wrestling with her.

For now I put down the bag, took off my shoes and went inside. Then I heard some quiet footsteps coming closer. Those light footsteps, that made you wonder if someone was trying to hide their presence, surely belonged to my mother.

“Welcome back, Shinobu”.

As expected, it was my mother. As I stood in the hallway, my mother pushed me aside and went to the front door.

“Brother, welcome back!”

Maybe she’d just gotten home from club activities, but Nazuna was still in her school uniform when she showed her face. Following my mother, she slipped under my arm heading towards the front door. Then  
“Welcome back, Luna-chan.”

“Welcome back, Luna-san!”

The two of them faced Luna.

“How was it? Did that idiot do a proper job of showing you around?”

“Luna-san, next time I’ll be your guide.”

Completely ignoring me, my mother and Nazuna were focused on Luna. How cruel. I turned around with a sigh, when it suddenly happened.

—Luna cried.

She must have been enduring it.

She bit her lip, clenched her fists and let her shoulders tremble.... but she couldn’t endure it.

She was crying big fat tears without a sound.

I wonder why she couldn’t endure it anymore?

—It will not cause trouble?

Luna’s words crossed my mind.

Ah, I see.

—Welcome back, Luna.”

The moment I said that Luna started to sob.

I figured as much.

—Welcome back. Luna was just happy about these words.

These words alone made her happy enough to cry.

Welcome back. Words saying ‘It’s alright for you to stay here’. Words

acknowledging you. Gentle words. They must have broken something inside her.

“Welcome back, Luna.”

I once again said it clearly, out loud.

“I.. I am sorry.”

A shaking voice.

“I... I know I should not cry. It causes trouble and creates anger....so I should not. But....I....I....”

Luna was covering her face with both hands and was trying her best, to form a smile. But it was in vain. There's no way we would accept that.

“It's okay.”

My mother put Luna's head onto her chest.

“Cry all you want. It's okay... It's okay.”

My mother didn't ask if anything had happened. She just repeated “It's okay” and patted Luna's head. Over and over again. To convey her feelings. “....Mother.”

Luna mumbled quietly.

“Yes.”

My mother nodded slowly.

Right then Luna cried loudly. Raising a voice like a child, she clung tightly to my mother....and cried.

I'll protect her. I want to make her smile and see her smile.

The moment I thought that, my chest heated up and my heart shivered.

A feeling like a missing piece falling silently into place.

I hadn't remembered Luna. I didn't know her circumstances. I didn't understand anything. But, I would protect her from whatever might happen.

I didn't want to see her crying again.

For some reason, even I felt like crying.

“....Don't.”

What was the point in me crying too. I wiped my eyes, which barely stopped the tears, whereupon Nazuna came back to me.

For some reason Nazuna had her head down and just put her head onto my chest without saying anything.

“Ugh. Ugh.”

“...Hey, Nazuna. Why are you crying too?”

“Infected.”

She said teary-eyed.

Guess she couldn't hold it in either, after looking at Luna.

Stupid as ever. But I liked that stupid side of hers.  
In my opinion, crying for someone was something really amazing. Without being sarcastic.

“Hey, Nazuna. Let’s go shopping next time.”

Clearing my throat with an “Ehem”, I continued.

“We’ll take Luna with us.”

“...Brother, you dropped the -san for her.”

While patting the surprised Nazuna repeatedly, I said.

“Yeah, because.... that makes her happy.”

The moment I spoke that out aloud, I felt a warmth spreading inside me.

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## Chapter 03: Not a slave, but a maid!

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—Today, it had been 6 days since Luna cried for the first time.

As promised, I went out shopping with Luna and Nazuna.

“It’s been a while since I went out shopping with Brother~”

When I turned around on her voice, Nazuna was happily grinning while clinging to my arm.

And with her right hand around my arm, her left hand was clutching Luna’s arm. Nazuna walked in a pleased mood. Somehow we looked like parents with a child.

She was humming “Shopping with Brother~”, but I remembered that we’d just gone shopping together a month ago. My memory was so clear, since we went to a large department store two stations away, where she’d said something like “I want to see western clothes, come with me~”.

I really wished she would ask her friends for that.

Unlike me, she had a lot of friends after all. She should just invite them and go look at clothes. To be honest, I had no clue about clothes. And swimsuits are even less of my speciality.

Aww, I was afraid I’d get dragged along for a swimsuit election again this year. What a pain.

“Wah~”

When I shifted my gaze towards the voice, Luna was looking around the area with sparkling eyes. She looked curiously at the general store, electronics store and bookstore. Judging by this, she should be even more surprised when I show her the game centre on the third floor or the movie theatre on the fourth floor.

“Luna-san, let’s go.”

As today’s leader, Nazuna lightly pulled on Luna’s arm and headed for the elevators.

First we were to buy clothes and underwear on the third floor. Apparently Luna only had one brassiere and sometimes just didn’t bother wearing it. My mother had a different size, so it couldn’t be helped, but... it was a perfect combination of and , Sensei.

Geez. Its charm comes from hiding it, not from fully exposing it. Let me announce at this point that underwear is supposed to be worn properly. So like that, first some underwear. Then clothes. So far, Luna made do with

clothes from me or my mother, but the sizes didn't fit. Let me squeeze in, that my mother is far away from being fat and sadly boasted proportions befitting a model, but Luna was a walking art gallery. Her bust exceeded my mother's, her waist made my mother envious and her hips made my mother resign.

Taking such a Luna with us, we went into the elevator.

"Wah, wah. Shinobu-san, Shinobu-san. Amazing. It is amazing. We are floating."

Looking out of the glass elevator, Luna raised her voice in fascination.

She was endlessly excited, pulling lightly on my sleeves. But

"...You're like a kid, Miss."

The boy, who was in the elevator with us, said teasingly and Luna turned red. Seeing that, the brat lost all reservation and said "A kid~!" while pointing at Luna.

"Huh? I'm gonna eat ya, wraar."

With a single glare, I shut the brat up. Then all the other people in the elevator increased their distance from us. And as the elevator reached our destination, I could even hear the teary voice of the brat from behind saying "A monster!". Luna and Nazuna gave me a bitter smile, but I pretended not to hear it and quickly got off. We reached the underwear section.

"Okay, I'll take a look at the underwear with Luna-san, so wait here, Brother."

"No. I won't wait. Not even a single second. That's why I'll go with you."

When I said that to Nazuna in front of the underwear store,

"Geez, you have no delicacy. You fail as a gentleman."

Gentleman, failure.

Damn Nazuna. What a heartless thing to say.

Sure, I was interested in what kind of underwear Luna would choose. My curiosity about her brassiere size had no limits. It seemed Nazuna had seen through my plans.

"...I was only joking, Nazuna. I'll go look at some super-alloy or something. Call me when you're done."

I turned around and left the underwear store behind me.

How regretful. I turned around to see Nazuna and Luna happily choosing underwear. If I were there, I would recommend some sexy red or black ones. No, wait. White isn't to be scorned either... Deep in thought I wandered around with no destination.

"....Mh?"

What suddenly entered my vision was: wildly swinging silver twintails. Red

eyes. A fine-featured face. And a sloppy yellow hoodie.

“Oh, it’s Elni.”

I stopped upon seeing the albino girl, Elni standing in front of the ice-cream store. You might have forgotten already, but Elni was the weird girl that stole my hotdog, made me treat her to food at a family restaurant, proclaimed herself a Goddess and gave me a ring as a present a few days ago.

“....What’s she doing?”

Elni was staring at the kids eating ice-cream near the store. With envious eyes, she was giving the ice-cream, the kids were licking a passionate glare. “Miss, you want an ice?”

A boy eating ice-cream asked that. He must have noticed Elni’s glare.

When I took a closer look, it was the same brat that made fun of Luna in the elevator. When Elni energetically nodded with a “Yeah”, the brat mockingly answered.

“I see, you want it. But, I’m not giving you any.”

What a cruel brat.

For a moment, Elni looked like she was going to cry, but then she faced away with a “H- Hmp”.

“N- Not like I wanted it anyway! I.. I don’t want an ice-cream. Not at all, you hear!”

Elni said while staring at the ice-cream.

With a “Hmm~”, the brat made a mean smile and continued to eat his ice-cream flaunting it in front of her.

Tears started swelling up in Elni’s eyes.

I could no longer watch this. Please stop it! Don’t bully this girl!

Thinking that, I drew closer to Elni.

“Gyaah!”

The moment the brat saw my face, he screamed.

“Huh? I’m gonna eat ya, wraar.”

When I said the same stuff as in the elevator, the brat screamed “Monster~” again and ran away. I ignored the brat and looked at Elni.

“Uwaaah! A monsterrr!”

Looking at me, Elni was going to run away like the brat.

“Hey, who are you calling a monster. Have you forgotten the generous me already? It’s me, sexy Shinobu-san, loved by everyone!”

“....Who are you?”

Elni looked at me with a puzzled look. She was totally doing that on purpose.

“Man, just when I thought I would treat you to an ice, since you had these longing eyes.”

Shinomun got angry. I wouldn’t treat her to any ice now and turned away. Upon seeing that Elni showed me her palm with a “Wait a moment” and hurriedly went somewhere else.

....What was she up to.

As I waited for Elni in that moment—suddenly my cell phone rang.

“Who is it?”

It was too early for Nazuna. They must still be choosing underwear...With that in mind I peeked at the display and it showed an unknown 11-digit number.

“Hello?”

Tilting my head while wondering who it could be, I answered the call.

“It’s me.”

I could hear a somewhat bossy girl’s voice.

“I see. And here is me, the great.”

I retorted.

“You’re Nanjou Shinobu.”

“Mh? How do you know my cell phone number? Let me guess, you’re a stalker!”

“Hehehe. Boy, what underwear are you wearing right now?”

“Th- That’s too embarrassing.”

I turned red on that shameful question.

“It’s fine. You won’t lose anything. Tell me.”

“Ehm, you know, actually... I’m not wearing any.”

“W- Wow! Now that’s serious. Very serious!”

When I lied for no reason, I heard a surprised voice through the phone.

“Okay! I’m coming over now!”

“Don’t”

“Don’t be so cold....I want to eat ice-cream.”

I turned around to the sad voice and Elni, holding a cell phone, who stood behind me.

“Yahoo~”

Elni greeted me with one hand.

Oh, I see. I remembered that I told her my cell phone number before. When I looked at Elni, she proudly showed me her cell phone while grinning.

“What do you think, cool, isn’t it? I just bought it! Now I can call you, Shinobu!”

She bought a cell phone for that, huh.

“...But, if you had money to buy a cell phone, why not just buy an ice-cream?”

I asked what was on my mind.

“That won’t do. Squandering is rad...No, I got it wrong. Squandering is bad! If I were to spend my money on luxury goods, I’d go bankrupt. And I wouldn’t have money for the train home.”

Elni answered with a serious expression.

....Didn’t she spend everything she had to buy the cell phone?

“More importantly, Shinobu. It’s a cell phone! Amazing, isn’t it?”

Since she had sparkling eyes, I nodded.

“Okay, Shinobu, save my number. Look, I already saved yours! The saleswoman showed me how, so I’ve nearly mastered all the functions already!”

Elni busily operated her cell phone.

She seemed to be in a good mood. It’s impressive that she managed to fill out the contract, but I’m better off not saying that aloud.

“Okay, okay. Let’s do that while you eat an ice-cream. Which do you want?”

“Vanilla, chocolate and strawberry!”

“...If you say so.”

I thought about telling her to have a little reservation, but seeing her smile made me lose all the will to complain. Just like she wanted, I bought her three scoops of ice-cream: vanilla, chocolate and strawberry, while I looked at my cell phone.

“Now then...”

“Mh? Shinobu, why are you saving my number under ‘Mad Dog’? A codename isn’t something you use so casually.”

I received a warning from Elni, who took a peek at my hands. I just ignored her and took a bite from the ice-cream in her hand.

“Oh, it’s good.”

which made me think that I should have bought one for myself as well.

“....An indirect kiss. \*blush\*”

Elni pretended to be shy while putting her hands on her cheeks.

Ignoring her again, I operated her cell phone and brought up the profile menu. I confirmed her mail address and saved it into my own cell phone. Surely, Elni as a beginner with cell phones wouldn’t have understood if I told her about infrared transmission. Giving the cell phone back to her I said,

“I’ll send you a mail, so save my mail address too.”

“Yay~ A mail. It’s my first.”

Elni seemed really pleased.

"Shinobu, what kind of mail will you send? An eloquent greeting? Or could it be a confession of love? Anything is fine, but nothing obscene please. It would just arouse me."

I was going to send Nietzsche's statement of "God is dead" to the excited Elni, when suddenly the cell phone in my hand rang. The display said "Nazucat".

"Yo, jackal here."

I put the cell phone to my ear and answered collectedly, when "Pantheress here."

....Mh? For some reason, a voice that wasn't Nazucat's answered.

"P- Pantheress? Wh- Who are you? And what happened to Nazucat?"

"Nazucat is dead."

"What the!"

"And you'll be the next to die."

"Oh god!"

"If you don't want to die, bring the funds you got from your mother to the underwear store! If you fail to do that... e- ehm, then we can't buy Lunasan's underwear!"

"Th- That's horrible!"

I replied "I'll be there soon" and hung up.

"We've got trouble on our hands."

"....What happened?"

Elni tilted her head, puzzled. I dramatically said.

"The trouble didn't happen here at the ice-cream store. It's at the scene of the crime! So I'm heading over there now!"

After saying what I'd wanted to say, I felt satisfied and nodded once. Then I said "Until next time" and left Elni, who still had her head tilted.

From behind myself, I could hear Elni's voice saying "Make sure to mail me later~!", so I waved my right hand in acknowledgement and hurried to the underwear store, when

"Whoops"

I spotted an acquaintance in the corner of my eye and stopped automatically.

Near the entrance of the game centre, stood a beauty with straight, long black hair—It was Gogyou-san. Seems like she took a day off from her ambushes, since she wasn't carrying her bamboo sword with her. In exchange she was holding a handbag now. And she wore a skirt. Casual clothes. Wonderful.

But what a surprise. Gogyou-san stood together with three boys. The boys all had dyed hair, pierced ears and frivolous looks. I wondered if Gogyou-san liked boys like that.

Thinking of how unexpected this was, I watched her, as Gogyou-san talked to the boys in a nervous state while shaking her hands, somewhat troubled. Her usual sharp eyes were now clouded and kind of worried.

Could it be that she was being hit on?

Now worried, I headed towards Gogyou-san without making any noise.

“Hey, you’re alone, right? Let’s play together. We won’t bore you.”

“We’re three boys, we can surely have some fun.”

“C’mon, let’s go. I know a good spot.”

“Yeah, let’s get going already, damn it. You got some fine tits there, damn it. What are they packed with? Love? Dreams? Or hope?”

The boys continued with vulgar smiles.

“You’re bored by yourself, right? C’mon, let’s get going.”

“We’ll treat you, so don’t let us down, okay?”

“Whatever, just show me these tits. Tits, you hear. Or if you dislike that, let me touch them, fondle and poke them.”

By the way, the one who wouldn’t shut up about “tits, tits” was me. I had just lined up beside the persistent guys and tried to join in naturally....but the boys noticed me and gave me fierce glares.

“Huh? Whatcha looking at?”

“Who are you? You know her?”

Before I could answer their questions,

“N- Nanjou-kun?”

Gogyou-san made a surprised face and called my name.

“...Hey, don’t expose my name so suddenly. I’ll be in trouble now when something happens.”

“Wh- What are you going to do....”

The worst case would be that it ends up in a fight, but using your fist for something like this isn’t worth it. The best solution was if we could resolve this by talking, but— there was something I had to do before that. I protectively stood before Gogyou-san and shouted with my fists raised towards the guys.

“Guys, stop this at once! Kidnapping a fair lady against her will is just rude! As long as I stand here firmly, I won’t allow such a thing!”

Yeah, I always wanted to do this at least once. Shinomun made his entrance. While acting all cool, I faced Gogyou-san and asked “Are you alright, Miss?”, when

“You’re evil.”

“Be gone.”

“Die.”

With these words from the boys, I got pushed on my chest, shoulder and back in quick succession and inadvertently lost my balance.

As I tried to regain my balance, Gogyou-san stood in front of me.

Just when I thought “not good”, it was already too late.

I bumped into Gogyou-san, who was in front of me.

But instead of the expected pain, I felt a warm and soft sensation over my whole body.

When I raised my head puzzled,

“N- Na- Nan- Nanjou-kun?”

Gogyou-san’s bright red face was extremely close.

It appeared that I had dived headlong into Gogyou-san’s chest.

A warm body temperature, two soft and big bulges and the scent of shampoo.

It was a really wonderful situation, but I wouldn’t have the time to enjoy it.

“...W- Well, there are days like this, you know? Just to be clear, it wasn’t on purpose.”

I slowly got off Gogyou-san and tried to smile with a cold sweat.

“N- Nanjou-kun, you....”

Still bright red, Gogyou-san’s eyes welled up with tears and she started to shake.

“idiooooot!”

Raising a loud voice that I’d never heard before at school, she pushed me away with both hands. No, she wasn’t simply pushing me away. It felt more like a blow.

A twin palm strike. Coming one step forward, bending her knees to lower her centre of gravity she drew strength from her entire body. I took the blow—and flew through the air.

I jumped backwards to mitigate the damage, but it was still quite powerful. Gogyou-san must’ve performed her twin palm strike by reflex. It was quite impressive how she could bring out her warrior side automatically.

Actually, a twin palm strike when she’s in the kendo club? Maybe she learned more martial arts than just kendo?

Not bad. The moment before I hit the floor, I employed a falling technique; rolling in mid-air and landed perfectly, raising my head.

I could see the three guys from earlier, running away with pale faces. You don’t see people flying through the air all that often. They must have

noticed that the girl they'd tried to hit on wasn't a cat, but a tigress. Gogyou-san doesn't go "Meow", but "Gwar". She's strong. When she saw me standing up, she quickly turned around and went away. Yeah, of course she would be angry. She was bright red up to her ears. Aww, now I had done it. Even if it was by accident, I did something unforgivable. I had to take responsibility. But I wouldn't apologise. As for the reason why, that blow really hurt. Not enough to cause a bruise, but it was still quite painful. If one of the guys from earlier had taken that hit, he might have broken a rib. Then my cell phone rang. When I looked on the display it said "Nazucat". She was probably calling to urge me to hurry to the underwear store already.

I ended up dawdling without planning to.

"Sorry, Nazuna. I was flying for a bit. Ehm, CAN YOU FLY?"

I made an excuse over the phone that I wouldn't even believe myself and mixed in some English into it.

"A cat who can't fly is just a cat."

An unexpectedly grumpy answer.

That's why I unconsciously mimicked a scene from a certain crimson character and shouted "Idiot!", then hung up. I thought Nazuna might get the references.... but I hurried anyway. I got the feeling that someone was shouting "Ah, h- hey, wait, Nanjou-kun" behind me, but I ignored it. I had to hurry.

\* \* \*

"Here, this is for you, Luna-san."

Having no clue what she was thinking, Nazuna suddenly said that.

After buying underwear and clothes for Luna, we were looking around in a general store, but Nazuna claimed "Wait a moment" and when she got back she said that sentence. The mug Nazuna handed over to Luna had a dog design printed on it. It was a mug from an animal print series that Nazuna liked.

Everyone in the Nanjou household had one of these mugs.

"Thank you."

Luna made a bright smile while accepting the mug from Nazuna. Nazuna was smiling back at Luna.

And I, with a stupid face and a running nose, watched over these two— It was just too pathetic. This little girl, who was younger than me and was in her mandatory education that allowed no part-time jobs, gave a present, yet I, who was called the gentleman in the neighbourhood, didn't do anything. I

couldn't ignore this.

"Okay. I'm going to buy something too."

"Really? Brother, I want that."

Nazuna pointed at the crane game at the game centre. She must have wanted that premium plush toy, but I wasn't listening. I completely ignored her.

"Luna, I'll buy you something too. What about a super-alloy? It's cool."

Hearing my words, Luna tilted her head and asked "What is a superalloy?", when she noticed that Nazuna was staring passionately at the crane game.

"I... I want that plush toy."

She was being considerate to Nazuna. Probably because it was written all over Nazuna's face.

"By the way, which plush toy do you want?"

"That wolf one—No, not that. The cat one. Yes, the cat."

Luna changed her target after observing Nazuna's expression.

Oh boy.

I shrugged my shoulders and went to the game centre. The place where Gogyou-san was being hit on moments ago. Reminds me, what was Gogyou-san doing at the game centre?

Since it was in front of the crane game, she may have wanted to get a plush toy, just like me now. I took out my wallet, picked a coin and challenged the crane game.

"Here I go!"

On the right timing I pressed the button and got a plush toy on my first try. It was a dog plush toy with small round eyes. White fur and a red hat. Quite fancy.

"Yes!"

I rejoiced, but Nazuna gave me a scornful look. Luna was clapping her hands with an "Amazing!", but after looking at Nazuna she stopped quickly.

"I got it. Once more."

I put the dog plush toy on my head and shouted "Dog power!".

For some reason, the image of the mad dog Elni floated into my head. The Elni in my head was holding an ice-cream in her left hand and had her right hand lifted over her head while shouting "Gwar".

"Gwaaaaar!"

I copied that and shouted. To my surprise, I got another plush toy. A cool look. Blue fur. And the cigarette in his hands turned out to be a chocolate cigarette on closer inspection.

I caught a fantastic wolf.

“Yes!”

“You did it.”

That’s the one Luna wanted. When I handed the wolf to her, she made a happy smile. It was a really cool wolf. It was just like me.

“It looks like Shinobu-san.”

Luna said while hugging the wolf against her big breasts. Ohh, how insightful.

“M’kay, let’s go.”

“Yes.”

Side by side, Luna and I were about to leave the place, when

“Meeow!”

When I turned around on her voice, Nazuna made a face like the world had ended and cried “meow, meow” in front of the crane game.

Left with no other choice, I continued to play the crane game to get the cat that Nazuna wanted. But halfway through I got sick of it, so I let Luna take over. Maybe it was beginner’s luck, but Luna got the cat with sunglasses that Nazuna wanted on her first try.

For a while, I watched the two of them happily hugging each other.

“So, what should I buy you, Luna?”

I said with the dog plush toy still on my head.

“E- Ehm, I already got the Mr. Wolf....”

“What? You dare to reject my goodwill? That’s quite cheeky of you. I’ll pinch your cheeks! If you don’t want that, then just honestly tell me what you want!”

I threatened Luna by lightly pinching her soft cheeks, that were like marshmallows.

“....Shinobu-san, is it really alright?”

Luna shyly asked and with the plush toy still on my head, I nodded firmly. Doing so made the plush toy fall from my head, diving into Luna’s breasts and headbutting the wolf plush toy.

“Uh, that hurt.”

Nazuna added a weird voice for the wolf, then hugged onto both the wolf and the dog saying “I’ll hold onto them”. Seeing that, Luna giggled and with a “Okay then” she walked out, pulling me by my hand. There wasn’t really any reason to hold my hand, but since Luna looked so happy, I let it slide. But really, Luna’s hand was so small. And so soft. What’s more, so warm.— Shit, I was somehow getting excited. My heart raced. While pretending to be calm, inside I was all flustered with “Shinomun is so embarrassed”. But when we reached our destination and Luna said “I want this”, the shock was

just too great, to the point that my mind went all blank.

How should I describe this?

To put it harshly: It's a dog collar. One designed for humans with certain 'interests'.

No, that's not quite accurate. Before your imagination runs wild, let me clarify. It was just a simple choker. It had a tartan checker pattern made of cowhide and cloth. For some reason it even had a metallic lock attached to it, but it was just a simple choker.

Still, quite the punk fashion. Too different from my image of her.

I imagined her in the service department, wearing maid clothes and saying "Welcome home, Master", but to think she was actually a Queen that swings around a whip savagely, while shouting "Fuck, fucking, fuck off". Scary. I'm scared. Shinobu is scared.

While shuddering, I bought the punk choker that the Queen desired.

"H- Here, my Queen—Ehem, Luna-sama."

"Luna-sama?"

Luna-sama tilted her head in confusion, looked at me and then graced me with her words.

"U- Uhm, then I have a favour to ask, Shinobu-san."

"Please order me to do anything."

I answered lightly shaking and averting my gaze, then Luna-sama turned red and issued me her order.

"...Can you put the collar on me?"

"Please do something like that on your own, Luna-sama."

Respectfully lowering my head, I rejected her, then proposed an alternative.

"Please acquire the help of the idiotic Nazuna for this task."

"But Nazuna-chan is looking at hats over there right now?"

I looked at the direction Luna was pointing at. Totally unaware of the pinch her brother was in, my idiotic sister was trying out some silk hats while still hugging the plush toys.

"Shinobu-san."

When I shifted my gaze back, Luna was giving me a passionate stare.

"Please."

Luna said, affectionately, while looking at me with upturned eyes.

Aww, I didn't expect that. I totally thought Luna would put that on someone, so I had not considered this possibility at all.

But when I thought about it, instead of putting it on someone, this was way better. If Luna were to tell me "Put it on me!" with a serious expression, I would shudder! Nazuna would shudder. And so would you.

Wait, who's "you"? I scratched my head, then nodded. Luna made a bright smile. She pulled up her hair on her back with both her hands and my jaw dropped.

Ohh, what a sexy pose.

It wasn't perverted in any way, but it looked so sexy. So erotic. So seductive. I was agitated. Thanks to Nazuna's spoiled nature, I thought I had developed a decent resistance to girls. I believed it to be on the same level as drying Nazuna's hair when she'd just come out of the bath.... but it was completely different.

When I reached out my hands to put the choker on Luna's neck, my hands lightly trembled. What's more, when my hands touched Luna's neck, "Mmh..."

Luna let out an alluring voice from her mouth, so I quickly pulled back my hands.

"D- Don't make any weird noises. Or else I'm also going to join in."

"I am sorry, Shinobu-san. But it tickled."

"Meh, endure this little bit of tickling, will ya."

What's with the "will ya"? I sighed in my mind and once again extended my hands that I had withdrawn before. Because I was so nervous, I couldn't really put the choker on Luna.

Every time my hands touched her neck or ears,

"Mm.... Uhn...Mh...Hah...."

Luna was trying to hold back her voice like I told her, but that was even more erotic for some reason. Every time that alluring voice escaped through her light pink lips, my heart couldn't help but skip a beat. Her flushed cheeks and cloudy eyes made her even more sexy. Erotic Luna.

Without a doubt I was agitated. I was just putting the choker on her neck, but it took me several minutes. I was speechless, as it would have certainly gone faster if Luna had put it on herself. But Luna was really happy and dearly stroked the choker when she said.

"Thank you, Shinobu-san."

Luna smiled with red cheeks. It was all good since she was pleased.... but there was something on my mind. Why did Luna want a choker? If she puts on a collar-like choker (moreover a strap one), it makes her look just like a slave.

Mh? Slave?

"...Hey, say. You said something about being my 'slave' before, but what was that about?"



"That is, uhm... for someone like me to stay by your side... that would be the only option... or so I thought...."

Luna's eyes were trembling in a lack of self-esteem.

Mh, somehow I got really angry. Wordlessly, I chopped Luna's head.

"O- Ouch! It hurts! Sh- Shinobu-san, you chopped me!"

No, it wasn't all that strong. Why was she close to tears?

"....I am shocked."

Luna's shoulders drooped in sadness . Seems like she received a shock. But it was Luna's fault. I sighed and this time patted her head when I said.

"You don't really need to be slave to stay with me."

Luna looked up at me, so I averted my gaze and went on.

"Not all relationships involve a slave. So stop calling yourself a slave. ...A- At least say you're a maid. A maid. Yes, a housemaid. A long, dark blue skirt and a white hair ribbon. Also black garter belt stockings. That's the best. It will also be on the test."

I believe it's one of my flaws, that I can't be serious when embarrassed. To hide my embarrassment, I just babbled something about the appeal of maids, when I felt a warmth on my left arm. Followed by a softness.

When I turned around in surprise, Luna was hugging my left arm. And not saying anything, she looked up at me and just smiled.

I was glad. It seemed I could properly convey my feelings to her.

Yeah, I was glad. Really glad, but this situation was a bit exciting for Shinomun.

Luna's two voluptuous breasts were pressed against my left arm, it was outrageous. Breasts were pressed against my arm, left and right. As Luna hugged me tightly, my arm was swallowed by her big breasts.

I forgot myself for a while due to the feeling of her breasts.

I still hadn't recovered yet, when Nazuna noticed us, came rushing back with a "meow" and hugged my right arm. Yeah, Nazuna was still growing. She'll be fine. No, it was wrong to compare them to begin with. The freedom of my right arm was taken away by Nazuna and I gave Luna the honour of holding my left arm. I was dragged around by them like that, as we went around the department store.

With the two of them still hugging my arms, we looked at a pet store, music store and so on, when guys around me, who I didn't know, accused me of "two-timing", but I paid it no mind.

Luna was smiling. She was happily smiling while holding my arm. While calling my name, "Shinobu-san" ...she was smiling.

That's why I thought that such a day off wasn't too bad.

\*\*\*

Why was I so sluggish on Monday, the end of the weekend?

Repressing a yawn, I walked to school like always.

“Meow~”

Guess Nazuna wasn’t on top of her game either, as she let out a weird yawn while exposing her teeth and rubbing her eyes. Mhm, it was quite rare for Nazuna to yawn.

“What’s with you. You went to bed late last night?”

Speaking of that, out of the ordinary she woke up at the same time as me today.

“You know, I was studying very hard until 1am last night.”

Nazuna answered while puffing out her chest.

“Eh? Y- You studied!? And until 1am!?”

“Yeah. I worked hard so that I could watch the late night anime.”

So her aim was the anime. Well, that was more like her.

“I got Luna-san to help me with my homework, so I could watch all of my anime. I didn’t really get it, but Mii-chan said it was interesting.”

I see. She watched the anime so she could talk about it with her friend Mii-chan. She should have just recorded it and watched it in the morning instead of forcing herself to stay awake.

“Well, I get that you’re a good girl that treasures her friends.”

“Then pat my head~”

Nazuna pointed her head at me and I continued with a “But.”.

“When I helped you with your homework on Saturday, you said ‘I’m too tired from the department store, so I’ll do the rest myself tomorrow.’ right? And then you just got Luna to help you with it? You were studying deep into the night on Sunday? What’s going on here, Nazuna-kun?”

While holding up the edge of my hand I added “Depending on your answer, a rain of chops might come down on your head.”.

“O- Oh noes! Nazucat was so sleepy she made a mistake!”

Nazuna quickly protected her head with both her hands.

Geez, what a troubling Nazucat. But it seemed she finished all of her homework, so I will forgive her.

But she got Luna to help her, huh. Guess Luna was quite smart. Actually it was a bit late to worry about it, but how old was Luna? By her looks or rather by her appearance, I would say she’s one or two years older than me, but I couldn’t be too sure. After all she was a foreigner.

“—Okay, Nazuna-kun. Your judgement is....”

I shifted my gaze back at Nazuna and said “innocent”, but the defendant

Nazuna must have been really sleepy. With her eyes only half open and not listening to me, she was walking unsteadily. Swaying to the right, swaying to the left, she was trying to cross the cross-walk of a busy street.

“Hey!”

I quickly grabbed Nazuna’s collar and pulled her back.

“Wawah!”

Seemed like I’d exerted more strength than I had intended to. Nazuna’s feet had left the ground and her throat must have been constricted. Nazuna was coughing painfully.

“Sorry. Are you okay?”

“No, not okay at all. I’m done for. Nazucat’s strength was just reduced to zero. So carry me, Brother.”

She clearly just wanted to sleep on my back. Nazuna extended both her arms, all spoiled.

“Don’t be so spoiled!”

Geez, there was a limit to how spoiled she could act. Half jokingly, I hit Nazuna’s head lightly. Then Nazuna looked at me surprised and suddenly started to tear up.

“F- Fuah~ B- Brother hit me.... You... hit me~”

“N- No, why are you suddenly starting to cry? It wasn’t that painful, was it?”

“It hurts~ My feelings are hurt~”

It appeared that I hurt her feelings. Nazucat really was a handful.

“Yeah, sorry, Nazuna. But you’re at fault too, you know? Walking that unsteadily is dangerous. What if you’re run over by a car?”

“That’s no problem once I get serious.”

“If you seriously think that, then your head is in quite the danger as well.”

“It’s not.”

Somehow she was pouting.

“It IS dangerous. Cars are lethal weapons that move around. You’re being targeted, you know?”

“Bring it on!”

“...You were once hit by a car, weren’t you?”

“And I’m alive as you can see!”

“Give it a rest already.”

My tone wasn’t really harsh. But Nazuna froze up on the spot and was on the verge of tears again. Maybe I did a scary face just now?

I let out a sigh and extended my hand towards Nazuna’s head.

“....Nazuna. Have you ever considered how I felt when you were taken to the hospital after being hit by a car? Dad, mum, everyone was really worried

about you. So... Be more careful from now on. Okay?"

Unconscious and in mortal danger.

She didn't know how much I cried at that time.

When I patted her head a bit stronger, she mumbled.

"...I'm sorry, Brother."

"Okay."

"I'm sorry for being stupid."

Aww, I got a headache.

"Geez, ask the world's forgiveness for your stupidity, dumb-cat."

"Being dumb is no flaw. It's a peculiarity."

Peculiarity, what a convenient word.

I sighed when Nazuna mumbled again.

"...I'll be more careful now."

Man, if she got it, she should just say so from the beginning.

I once again patted her head, then Nazuna smiled happily and took my hand.

"Like this it won't be dangerous."

"You don't ever grow up, huh."

"I'm fine with that."

Nazuna hummed as she walked while swinging my hand.

If we had held hands like this back then too, Nazuna wouldn't have gotten into an accident. Pondering about that, I looked at Nazuna's small hand, when

"Brother, your hand is so big."

Suddenly Nazuna said that.

"Rough and thick skin. Lots of scars too. Just like dad's or gramps'."

"Really?"

"Yeah. You have gotten strong. You were training really hard at gramps' doujo."

"...Because I'm weak."

Unlike my father, I had no talent for martial arts.

Even my gramps, who was always fooling around, told me "You want to take over the doujo like that? Give it up." with a serious expression.

Give up. Not suited. No talent. I was told off clearly.

No goal. No fighting spirit. No ambition. Martial arts won't be mastered like that. Just stop at a level sufficient for self-defence. When my gramps told me that, I was in shock. That's why I had once before stopped training at my gramps' doujo.

In the end, I had no will to become strong. I was just playing around. I was

admiring my dad and gramps, who were strong. That was my only stupid reason.

One won't really become strong like that.

But. Looking at my own hands, I wondered: Why did I want to get stronger? Why didn't I give up?

Spitting blood, broken bones, countless defeats. I trained and trained and trained. I blindly went on. Stimulated by an unregulated agitation, I went on.

At some point I forgot the reason why I wanted to become stronger.

“You have gotten strong.”

“I hate being powerless.”

I still remembered quite clearly how I hated my weak self for not being able to do anything when Nazuna was hit by a car. I also remember that I vowed to protect Nazuna the next time after she recovered.

But somehow that didn't seem to be the only reason.

Was it really just for Nazuna?

I didn't think so. That pain, the agitation, the sadness, the feelings when I clenched my fists, I had the feelings these all were for someone else. When I wondered about it— My head started to hurt again.

Maybe I had forgotten something important?

I was suddenly befallen by such a hunch.

“...Brother, what's up?”

I must have had an unexpectedly harsh expression. Nazuna was looking at me, all worried.

Whoops. Not good. Being so gloomy early in the morning wasn't good.

I put my hand into my bag and pulled out the dog plush toy. The one with white fur and a red hat that I got at the crane game two days ago. I put the plush toy on my head and shouted.

“Combine – Shinomundog!”

“Brother, you like that doggy?”

“I do”

While thinking I would give it as a present to the Mad Dog Elni next time we met, I walked to school like always with a dog plush toy on my head and holding Nazuna's hand.

\* \* \*

4th period ended and it was lunch break now. A happy lunch time, but... I was troubled.

“....What did you do?”

Sitting oppositely to me, Asada asked me, all worried.

“Gogyou-san has been glaring at you all morning.”

Yeah. I had been feeling her gaze all morning.

I feared that the reason was me diving into her breast at the department store two days ago.

“Maybe I can be of help?”

Mere Asada dared to speak words of reliance.

“Can’t be helped. If you insist so much, then I will have to take you up on your offer. Listen.”

“Not that I care, but you always get so cocky immediately. It’s somewhat cool how you’re going so far.”

“Don’t fall for me.”

“S- Stop it. Don’t hold the carrot like a cigarette. If you do that, I... I’ll... I’ll fall for you!”

Asada said something disgusting.

I thought about not consulting him after all, but— why not try it.

“Asada, listen. Actually, there was an accident....I ended up putting my head into Gogyou-san’s breasts.”

When I honestly described the happening,

“Say that again, bastard!”

Suddenly Asada stood up shouting angrily.

“Are you bragging? You’re bragging to me? Say that’s it!”

“That’s it.”

Like he requested, I nodded arrogantly, which caused Asada to get even more agitated.

“Unforgivable. I won’t forgive you! I’m really angry now! My anger is at its max!”

“Shut up. I’ll give you my spinach, so let me off the hook.”

“Yay~”

Asada’s mood was fixed with spinach.

“So, Asada. Tell me a thing that Gogyou-san likes.”

“...What? You want to make up with a present? That’s just cowardly.”

Asada said, attempting to pry, while eating the spinach.

“Asada, I’ll give you my fried egg that you like so much. What do you say?”

I flapped the fried egg in front of his eyes.

“You know, despite her looks, Gogyou-san really likes animals. I heard she loves dogs.”

Asada immediately answered. The man you could buy with fried eggs, Asada Kouta.

“Mhm. Dogs, huh. Well, no other choice. I’ll hand you over to her next time.”

“Hey, but I’m a Shiba dog.”

A Shiba dog was also a dog. I had no idea what kind of complex Asada had, but Gogyou-san surely would’ve rejected such a stupid dog anyway.

“But to be serious, it’s better if you go apologise.”

“I don’t need a small fry like you to tell me.”

“Again so arrogant! But that makes you fascinating and admirable~”

When I replied “Disgusting!” at the meandering Asada, I also thought that. I had to properly apologise to Gogyou-san.

So I was waiting for a chance to apologise to her during lunch break. But the popular Gogyou-san was always accompanied by someone, so there wasn’t really a chance to.

Even I was reluctant to just go over and interrupt Gogyou-san chatting, to apologise with a “Sorry for stuffing my head into your breasts!”.

I was worrying over what to do, when it was suddenly after school already.

“Yeah, I’m not in form today. I’ll try again tomorrow. After all, the timing is important for this.”

I mumbled some excuses and stood up from my chair, when

“Nanjou-kun, can we talk?”

Suddenly I was called from behind. I was so surprised that I nearly jumped up.

That voice belonged without a doubt to Gogyou-san.

Wh- What now. I wasn’t prepared for this at all.

I was sure that when I turned around, I would get beaten to tears with “You pervert! Breast Monster! Breast Gentleman! Breast Maestro!” and be avoided by everyone in class on the next day. Not that I really cared about being avoided, but I had to apologise to Gogyou-san properly.

I took a deep breath to calm myself, then turned around.

“Nanjou-kun, do you have time now?”

Gogyou-san didn’t appear angry at all, but just talked to me with her dignified eyes, like usual.

That was a surprise. But a surprise I gladly accept.

Even though I thought that she wasn’t really angry, I didn’t let down my guard. I behaved humbly.

“You need something? If it’s for you, I’ll make the time. What’s up?”

I asked her with a smile, while having a cold sweat on the inside. Gogyou-san stared at me, then said.

“Nanjou-kun. You said you did a devil summoning in your childhood, but are you still practicing it?”

Gogyou-san had a quite serious expression.

Aw, did I really look like such a wicked man?

Or was that her own way of insulting me? I guess she was angry after all?

You already look like a criminal, so I guess you're running around night after night committing crimes. I was sure that was what Gogyou-san wanted to say....I was quite hurt.

“....Gogyou-san, it was my fault. I'll apologise, so don't insult me so cruelly.”

“Ehh? W- Wait, no. I wasn't insulting you. It's not like that. I told you before, didn't I? That I could feel a bad presence from you.”

“You were already insulting me back then?”

“No. I said no!”

While I received a shock, Gogyou-san denied it while frantically waving her hands.

“What I want to say is that the bad presence coming from you has gotten even stronger. So I was worried....”

When Gogyou-san said that, our classmate Minami came over with her short skirt fluttering. Minami, who often ate lunch with Gogyou-san, made a creepy “Nishishi” smile.

“Nanjou-kun. Are you sure you didn't do anything bad? Gogyou-san's got a strong spiritual sense. What she says is usually right. Just recently Yanase-san from class 3, who had a series of bad luck, consulted Gogyou-san, when she said 'You're possessed by an evil spirit'—”

“So what? She made her buy an expensive pot?”

“No! She properly exorcised it! Because she knows how to! So, listen to her properly!”

For some reason, Minami stuck her chest out with pride as if she was talking about herself.

The moment she did that, her big breasts swayed, but compared to Luna's melon breasts, these were two cute things. In my mind I dryly commented “She still has a long way to go”.

“....Mhm, exorcism, huh.”

I took my eyes off Minami and nodded half believing, half doubting.

“Ah, you're not believing it. You don't believe it at all, Nanjou-kun. I'm sure divine punishment will befall you for that! Okay, apologise to me right now. Treat me to juice. If it's now, I'll forgive you.”

“...Who do you think you are? Give it a rest or I'll spank your butt.”

I threatened the cocky Minami, when

“St- Stop that! If you do that, I'll fall for you~”

Minami pressed both her hands on her bottom and ran away.

What a weird girl. I shifted my gaze back to Gogyou-san.

“So, about that bad presence, is it dangerous? Though I don’t really believe in this stuff.”

“...To tell you the truth, it’s quite bad. That’s why I was worried. Nanjou-kun, did something strange happen to you lately?”

Strange, huh....

“If I had to name something, it would be that I can also become Shinomundog now.”

I hadn’t answered her seriously, so I could understand her reason for glaring at me.

“Sh- Shinomundog?”

Gogyou-san tilted her head and made a wry look. I pulled out the crane game prize, the dog plush toy from my bag and put it on my head.

“Combine- Shinomundog! I’m a dog! I’m strong! I’m cool! Wuff!”

“Wuff.”

I didn’t know why, but Gogyou-san suddenly replied with a “Wuff”. And she smiled nicely. A face of an innocent child. I grabbed the dog on my head and moved it to the right, whereupon Gogyou-san also followed it to the right. Then when I moved it to the left, she also moved left. When I moved it upwards, she stretched her back. And when I moved it down, Gogyou-san bent down.

Funny. As a test, I threw away the dog, Gogyou-san kicked off the ground and perfectly caught the dog. Then she said to me while hugging the dog to her chest.

“How mean of you to throw it. Poor dog. What if it were to get hurt!”

I... I made her angry.

“Then, you keep it, Gogyou-san.”

“Can I?”

Gogyou-san’s eyes were sparkling. I had intended to give it to Elni, but I’ll give it to Gogyou-san as an apology. She seemed to like it.

“Be sure to give it a name, you hear?”

“Of course. I’ll think of one.”

Gogyou-san was full of motivation.

“Thank you, really. I couldn’t get it last time, so I had given up on it.”

....Mh? Couldn’t get it last time?

“Could it be, that was the reason you were at the crane game two days ago?”

“Yeah. I found it while I was shopping—”

For some reason she turned red and looked down.

“What’s up?”

“...U- Uhm, I’m sorry. I thought it would be okay not to bring it up and when you talked to me like usual, I ended up taking advantage of you.... I’m really sorry for back then.”

Gogyou-san suddenly raised her head.

For some reason, the victim, who had her breasts dived into, was apologising.

“I knew it was an accident. I knew you were just trying to help me. Yet, I ran away out of shame. I’m so pathetic.”

I was also pathetic for being somewhat happy in my heart when I had my head in her breasts.

“No, Gogyou-san. That was my fault. Mine alone. So don’t worry about it. Actually, you can even upbraid me.”

“I can’t do that. I mean, you were trying to help me.”

“Though I couldn’t do anything. I just flew through the air. Then the boys just left by themselves.”

“Uhh, sorry. Did it hurt?”

Maybe out of self-hate, Gogyou-san became even more apologetic in her expression. I quickly shook my head from side to side.

“No, I was fine. Don’t worry.”

“....Really? You weren’t hurt?”

“Of course not. Who do you take me for? Don’t look down on the great me just because you went to the national kendo tournament, Missy.”

I said jokingly to the sad-looking Gogyou-san. Then she made a somewhat surprised expression.

“...Say, can I ask something?”

She asked shyly.

“So you knew that I’m doing kendo?”

“Yeah. And that you’re strong. I heard all kind of heroic tales from Asada.”

When I nodded, Gogyou-san made a bashful expression.

“....If you knew all that... why were you trying to help me?”

“Mh? I mean, it was scary, right?”

When I answered like that, Gogyou-san was taken aback for awhile and then nodded a “...Yeah” with an embarrassed smile.

I knew she was scared. I heard from Asada about Gogyou-san’s heroic tale of rescuing girls from persistent flirts, but rescuing a girl from getting hit on and getting hit on yourself are two completely different things. To be extreme, the mental pressure is as different as seeing a sex-offender and getting attacked by a sex-offender.

I, who was molested by a man in the train as a kid, knew that better than

anyone. I was really scared back then. The man's wild snorting was....No, let's not go so far.

With my back to Gogyou-san, who was patting the dog plush toy on the head, I said.

"Okay, treasure that dog."

"Ah, yeah. Thanks. You're really kind, Nanjou-kun."

When I turned around, Gogyou-san went on with a surprised expression.

"Everyone says you're a scary person, a devil or an ogre, but I'm not scared, since you're kind."

"...I don't know if you're praising or insulting me, but that surprised look of yours sure is rude."

Actually, I was being called an devil and ogre by my classmates?

How cruel. Why do I, the gentleman, have to be called that?

"Man, I'm leaving. You go to your kendo club or whatever. Also, you can attack the students in the hallway while shouting 'Gotcha!'."

"G- Gotcha!? I won't do such a thing."

"So you say, but you're always running around with a real sword, ain't you?"

I jokingly said and I pointed to the bamboo blade in Gogyou-san's hand.

"Ehh? Y- You even know that I have a sword in there?"

For a change, Gogyou-san was extremely surprised.

Actually, there was really a real sword in there!? I hoped she was joking, but thinking that she has her own circumstances, I decided not to ask about it.

I took my bag, said "See you" and turned my back to Gogyou-san, whereupon

"Ah, wait, Nanjou-kun. Let's go part of the way together."

So she said and we walked down the hallway together.

"What name should I give it?"

She consulted me with a smile.

Seemed she was really pleased about it. Gogyou-san had a happy expression.

I stopped, crossed my arms and thought of a name with a serious expression.

Maybe mimicking me, Gogyou-san also stopped and stared closely at the dog plush toy. We both stood in the hallway and were trying to think of a name with all our might. When we decided on "Hayato", I parted from Gogyou-san.

On my way home, I wondered.

The bad presence Gogyou-san mentioned, what was it?

Apparently, Gogyou-san was so obsessed over the dog plush toy that she

had forgot about it... but Minami said something about divine punishment.  
Was that really possible?

As I lowered my head, Elni's ring came into view.

Mhm. Reminds me, I was sure it was after I put on this ring that Gogyou-san told me that I stink....

Don't tell me this ring was cursed?

That's scary.

I better ask Elni when I meet her next time.

\* \* \*

"I'm home"

Opening the front door, I went into the house. When I looked at the clock in the foyer, it displayed half past seven. It had gotten really late. I got home three hours later than usual.

On my way back, I had stopped by a bookstore and bought a novel, but that wasn't all.

For some unknown reason, I was attacked by a swarm of bats on the street. Don't tell me the bats were somehow related to the "bad presences"

Gogyou-san was speaking of— Fighting them with that in mind, I won over them and went home, but it'd gotten really late.

I regretted not chasing and finishing off the fleeing bats.

"Shinobu-san, welcome home."

As usual, Luna came scurrying to the front door with a smile.

"I will take your bag."

"No. It's got a porn book inside it today, so lay off."

I was showing off with broken Japanese.

But Luna just said "No problem. I will not throw it away" with a smile.

With futile resistance, my bag was taken away by Luna.

"Give it back later, okay? Swear it! I won't know what I'll do to you if you lied to me!"

When I made suspicious moves with my hands,

"Out of the way."

Suddenly I received an attack to my stomach. I was kicked. I bumped into the wall.

I didn't even need to ask who would do such a terrible thing. The only one in our family that resorted to such meaningless violence was my mother. Damn. Like always, she had approached me without making any noise.

But I sure let my guard down. I was still green for not being able to dodge that. This wouldn't have happened if I had spread out my 'ki' over my whole

body. I dropped my guard since I was at home. Luna's cute smile made me drop my guard. It was all Luna's fault.

"How are you going to take responsibility, Luna!"

"Ehh? B- But I have not done anything? I just wanted to take your bag and talk with you a bit in front of your room.... that is all...."

Luna got uneasy.

"You're the worst."

"I don't want to be told that by you. Don't you find it cruel to kick your dear son that just came home? What part of you is a mother, damn it."

When I called my mother, who appeared right beside me, an "idiot", I was punished by the iron claw.

If Luna hadn't come to my rescue, I'd would've screamed loudly due to the great pain.

"Tomoe-san, please do not bully Shinobu-san. He is scared. He is in pain and shaking."

"That's just an act. An act, you hear. Actually, you can be angry, Luna-chan. The idiot said 'Today I'll come home early, yay~ I'll pay with Luna, yay~', but he didn't come home at all. You were waiting for him all the time."

"Shinobu-san was busy. He must have had something to do at school."

"Y- Yeah, Shinobu-san was busy. On the way home he was attacked by bats and fought a fight to the death. It's true."

I claimed "It's really true" to my angry mother, but she wouldn't believe me at all.

"You believe me, right Luna?"

I looked pleadingly at Luna.

"....Bats."

For some reason Luna became serious and frowned.

"...Eh? You don't believe me either?"

"Eh? N- No. Not at all. I believe you. I do! There was just something bothering me—Ah, please do not make such a face."

"...Shinomun is going to his room."

"Aww, he got all depressed. What now. What should I do?"

"Just leave him be. Actually, he can drop dead."

"T- Tomoe-san, that's so mean! Please be kinder to Shinobu-san!"

"Luna-chan, you look cute even when you're angry."

"...Eh? —Eh, kyaa. T- Tomoe-san, s- stop it please. Where are you touching mee~ S- Stop.... Yahn..."

I could hear Luna's and my pleased mother's voice from behind, as I headed to my room.

From behind me stuff like "Such big breasts" and "Yahn..." could be heard, but Shinomun ignored it. Shinomun was depressed. Shinomun wasn't really envious or anything.

When I got back to my room, I took out the novel I bought earlier from the bag that I had snatched back from Luna. I was going to soothe my broken heart by reading. I looked down at the book.

Just to be clear, it wasn't an erotic novel.

It was the newest release of my favourite series. The previous volume came out six month ago and now a new volume had finally came out. I was full of anticipation.

"...Huh? Where is it?"

It had been six month since I read it.

I had completely forgotten where I put the previous volume.

You might want to keep your favourite novels in once place. That was my thought too. But since I had so many books it was a pain to order them.

"Where did I put it?"

I pulled books out of my bookshelf and looked for the book in question...When I found a pure black book in the back of the shelf.

Wondering what it was, I pulled it out, but it had no title.

What was this.

It was omitting an ominous aura and was really standing out from the other books.

"...When did I buy such a book?"

I picked it up and skimmed through it. On a page written in English, there were illustrations of magic formations and grotesque pictures of humans and animals used for sacrifices.

This was a black magic book without doubt. Impressive that I had the guts to buy this back in elementary school. Just because I found it in an old bookstore, didn't mean I had to buy it.

What's more, I remembered how I deciphered the English with a dictionary, so that I could call forth a devil. But why had I wanted to call a devil to begin with?

I stared at the black magic book—THROB. Suddenly I felt a strong pain running through my head as it never had before. A pain that seemed to break my skull apart and made my eyes tear up. My vision became distorted and a fragmented images appeared in my head.

Red blood. A younger me crying. A smile. An extended hand. A head being patted. Warmth. A crying girl. A younger me crying. A cat plush toy—The image fragments were flashing in my head and the pain got worse.

Unchecked, I got on my knees and started to groan....But when I shook my head and stood up, the pain was gone completely and I forgot everything I saw just now.

Probably because I'd let go of the book.

Without saying anything, I stared at the book.

"...Better put it back."

I carefully touched the black magic book and quickly put it back into the shelf.

Wondering what that all was about, my pulse rose a few beats, whereupon  
—KNOCK, KNOCK

Suddenly a knock on my door. I winced in surprise.

"Wh- Who's there! A thief?"

"Eh? E- Ehm, it is me."

I could hear Luna's voice from beyond the door. "Uhm, are you angry about earlier? I was not doubting you. I believe you." Luna went on, but what was that about earlier?

Suspicious. Was it really Luna? The person on the other side of the door only said "It is me".

"I won't understand with just 'me'. Name yourself. And then pluck. Pluck like crazy."

"P- Pluck what?"

"...A guitar?"

"I am sorry, I cannot play it."

"Then learn it and report to me afterwards. Rather, name yourself already."

"I am Luna, Shinobu-san."

"Really? Are you really Luna?"

"Yes, I am Luna."

A soft tone. I'm sure Luna was smiling beyond the door. But I still had no intention of opening the door.

"If you're really Luna, you should be able to answer the following question. Answer the question and prove that you're Luna.""

"I will do my best!"

Somehow Luna was all fired up. Why?, normally one would get sick of it...Could it be, she was happy I paid attention to her? Then she was just like a dog.

Okay, let's make it an easy question.

"Here comes the question. What cup are Luna's breasts? Choose from the three following choices: 1) D-Cup. 2) E-Cup and 3) F-Cup. Okay, which is it?"

"E- Ehm... The right answer is not included..."

“Holy! Then what size are they?”

“W- Well, one size bigger.”

Luna answered shyly.

Oh my god. Luna’s fighting power had exceed my expectations by far. Bigger than the third choice, was that even allowed? Even if God were to forgive it, I wouldn’t! Yeah.

“You just made a lot of women your enemy.”

“N- No way. You told me to answer, so I suppressed my shame and answered!”

“Yeah, you did well. You can come inside.”

“Ah, yes. Excuse me.”

Along with her voice the doorknob was rotated and the door opened. Luna appeared with a red face.

“So, what do you need? My shoulders are stiff, massage them.”

“Yes.”

Luna drew closer to me somehow happy, but then stopped halfway and shook her head lightly to the side as she remembered something.

“Shinobu-san, dinner is ready. I will massage your shoulders after it, okay?”

If Luna had worn maid clothes, she would have been a maid without doubt.

While I considered persuading my mother into letting Luna wear maid clothes, I headed to the living room together with Luna.

I had completely forgotten about the black magic book...

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## Chapter 04: Moon's real identity

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It was a fragment of my memories.

The screeching sound of brakes. A small figure flying through the air. Red blood. Hollow words. A sobbing voice. My own wet cheeks. The warmth of a hand touching my head. A gentle warmth. A gentle smile. Gentle words. A sad smile. Sad eyes....Two painfully weak hands.

Shouted words. Promised words. Forgotten words. My extended hand—“Shinobu-san.”

I awoke to a worried voice calling my name.

HAH. I opened my eyes and sat up suddenly. My body was hot and covered in sweat all over. Both my fist were tightly clenched and my heart was beating fast. The morning sunlight through the curtains was strangely bright.

“...Are you okay? Did you have a nightmare?”

When I looked up towards the voice, Luna was looking at me with a worried expression.

“Did you have a scary dream?”

“Y- Yeah, I did. A horrible dream. I don’t really understand it though. It was a dream about me being crushed by beautiful girls wearing swimsuits. Geez. They just wouldn’t let go of me.”

I opened my fists under the blanket while I forced myself to smile... but it seemed like she noticed that I was forcing myself.

“It is okay.”

Luna gently extended her hand towards me.

“It is okay now.”

The warmth of my head being touched. A warm and soft sensation. A feeling like being embraced.

Strange. Was I still dreaming? She’d just patted my head, but I felt like I was being embraced.

I calmed down. My hands loosened by themselves and the strength slipped out of my body.

Hah, if I were to close my eyes now, I would fall asleep again. It was that soothing.

Getting elated by the sensation of a gentle hug I snuggled up with a calm heart.

“....Wait a sec.”

Was I a kid or what? Wasn’t it a bit embarrassing to calm down by having your head patted after having a scary dream? Actually, it was quite embarrassing.

“...Is that your way of harassing a warrior?”

“Eh?”

Freeing myself from Luna’s hands that were enveloping my head, I shouted. “THERE!”

I expressed my displeasure by extending my forefinger and poking Luna’s cheek. Luna then quickly tried to escape my finger with a “Wawah”.

Most likely it was ticklish for her. Luna was defending herself with both her arms while laughing.

Mm, this was funny. Her flustered behaviour and surprised face were quite lovable.

“There, there!”

I got carried away and poked Luna’s body through holes in her defence while letting out a flashy voice.

“Hya... Ah...”

Suddenly an erotic voice escaped from Luna’s mouth.

And there was a soft sensation on my finger.

My eyes widened. They practically were opened to the limit. I watched intensely.

—My finger was poking into Luna’s breast.

Even through the clothes, I could feel the volume that I had measured wrongly before. My finger was swallowed by the soft and elastic breast and even my first knuckle joint was enveloped by the breast.

But that wasn’t all. My finger was being pushed back. The tense flexibility of her breasts repelled the invasion of my finger. I undauntedly went on the offensive. By doing that, a rich sensation came back at me. Th- This is amazing. All excited, I pressed down into the middle of Luna’s right breast.

“Nyaah... Uhhn....Sh- Shinobu-san, st- stop~”

“Mh?”

I raised my head on her erotic outcry. Luna was looking at me with a bright red face.

Then my reasoning came back to me.

“Wait, that wasn’t my intention.”

Spouting some nonsense excuse, I quickly drew my finger back. Luna was red up to her ears and looked down.

Aww, what now. While thinking of how I could gain her forgiveness,

“...Uh- Uhm, Shinobu-san, do you want to touch my breasts?”

Looking up at me, Luna asked with her face still bright red. I panicked.

Then.

“Could you call them boobies instead of breasts?”

In my panic, I voiced out my inner desire.

Luna seemed to be troubled, then asked once again while turning red.

“Shinobu-san.... Do you want to touch... my, ehm... boobies?”

“—Ah, the wind is calling for me! I have to go! After all, I’m a gentleman!”



Shouting some nonsense, I moved towards the door in an attempt to flee. Even I thought that it was a horrible way to cover up things. Did I have a screw loose? Why couldn't I honestly say that I wanted to touch them? Why had I gotten embarrassed? Why?

I fiercely asked myself, but the only answer I'd got was: You're a wuss.

I dropped my shoulders for being so pathetic.

"Shinobu-san"

"Y-Yes."

When I turned around on being called— KISS, I suddenly felt a soft and warm sensation on my cheek.

"....Eh?"

I let out a perplexed sound inadvertently.

Her soft hair on my shoulder. Her wet pink lips close by. Her long eyelashes on her closed eyes. Her cheeks still red.

"...Payback for touching my boobies."

She said mischievously.

Aww, why was my heart beating so strangely fast?

Was I sick? Speaking of that, my cheeks had been strangely hot for a while and my heartbeat was unusually fast.

"This doesn't look good. I'll rest today."

"Ehh? Y- You hated it that much~?"

When I claimed to "be sick", Luna got all teary-eyed for some reason.

I wonder why?

\* \* \*

Classes were over and I sat at my desk while looking out of the window. Usually I was the first to leave when the bell rings, but today I let someone else have that glory.

While letting out a sigh, I averted my gaze from the rain on window.

—Yes, rain. It suddenly started to rain when it was time to go home.

The rain continued to pour down loudly and didn't seem like it was going to stop any time soon.

The weathergirl on TV had said "Today it'll be sunny all over. Hallelujah.", so I trusted her and didn't bring an umbrella. I wouldn't have minded getting wet, but hoping the rain would ease up after a while, I stayed in the classroom and waited.

The classroom was filled with the chatter from people of either the going home club, who awaited for the rain to stop like me, or the sports club, who had nothing to do now.

While listening to the laughter of my classmates, I silently continued to stare at the rain.

The pouring sound of the rain. The peculiar smell of the rain. The drenched trees.

I was thinking of making a poem out of it, since I had nothing better to do anyway, whereupon

“—Ah, there you are, Shinobu-san.”

I thought that I'd suddenly heard Luna's voice....Was it my imagination? There was no way Luna would suddenly show up at school. Wondering what kind of hallucination it was, I turned my gaze to the classroom door. “Shinobu-sa~n.”

I saw a blonde haired girl with a dynamite body happily waving her little hand at me.

The blonde girl was smiling cutely and calling out my name.

Without a doubt it was Luna. But what was she doing here?

Could it be she was an illusion created by my brain?

When I waved back at her, she smiled brightly and came closer.

My classmates in the classroom looked at Luna, who came closer to me with her dazzling blonde hair waving, letting out captivated sighs. Then they all made way for Luna. She was a bit like Moses.

“A... A Goddess has descended upon our school!”

Someone shouted and the others nodded in agreement.

Luna tilted her head perplexed at the reactions of my classmates, but continued to come over to my desk in a straight line.

“Shinobu-san, I brought you an umbrella. Let us go home together.”

Luna smiled gently.

On Luna's left arm hung two umbrellas. One black, one pink.

....Could this be a dream?

To confirm that, I extended my hand towards Luna's cheek and lightly pulled on it.

“R- Rouch. Wry ale you pinching me?”

Luna was in tears.

Mh, if it hurt it means it wasn't a dream. So this was reality, huh.

“Shinobu-san, ale you angly?”

Luna looked sad, so in order to fool her I said.

“No, this is an action to feel your existence better. Basically it's an expression of affection.”

“...Affekhion? I ree. Okay rhen.”

Luna brightened up immediately.

Yes, I brilliantly fooled her, but... I felt quite guilty. I avidly let go of Luna's cheek, which was a bit red, probably from my pinching.

Aw, I did something bad. But for some reason Luna looked happy, I better apologise after all.

"N- Nanjou-kun! Do you know that Goddess? Say, do you know her!?"

"....Mh? Yeah, she's my maid."

It was too much of a pain, so I just gave the boys with bloodshot eyes, a random answer.

"Y- You demon! You're a demon, Nanjou-kun! It's R-18!"

"Y- You're the worst! You're scum , Nanjou-kun! For kidnapping a foreign girl, forcefully training her and in the end turning her into the slave called maid! And it saddens me, how she doesn't even deny it! You demon!"

For some reason I received a bombardment of accusations from the girls in the classroom, as well.

"Nanjou-kun! You did the unforgivable! For tainting this beauty—You'll never be forgiven! I misjudged you! But I need to know how you captured her!"

"Yeah, tell us! How can we get our hands on such a blonde beauty? Money? Power? Or is it love? Tell us! Otherwise I'll start crying like a baby!"

After the girls, the boys also started a ruckus. It was so annoying that I just hit my desk with a bam.

"—Shut up, damn it. Stop your damn whining or I'll show you hell, man."

I threatened them a bit as a joke, but my classmates all went pale and shivered fiercely.

...Eh? Was I really that scary?

Sure, I'd tried to make an evil look on purpose, but for it to have had this much of an effect somehow made me depressed.

As I became depressed....I noticed a disturbance coming from the hallway. Wondering what it was, I listened carefully. I could hear the noisy voices of boys saying stuff like "It's a blonde beauty!", "A witness said she entered the sophomore classroom!", "Find her! All of this world is with her!" or "Wow, truly the One Piec— no, forget that."

If we stayed here, it would become a big ruckus again.

The guys in the classroom also looked like they would start up once again....Such a pain, so we better leave.

I said "Let's go home", pulled Luna's hand and left the classroom at high speed.

"Ah, he fled! While still monopolising our Goddess, Nanjou-kun escaped our questions!"

“Nanjou-kun, you lust monster! Geez! Tomorrow you’ll tell us everything! And if you get mad, I’ll tell on you to Gogyou-san!”

...Are you that scared of me that you have to rely on Gogyou-san?

Thinking of how sad that was, I headed for the shoe lockers while still pulling on Luna’s hand. Luna seemed to have changed into the guest slippers, so we both changed our shoes there and headed for the school gate.

“Here, Shinobu-san.”

When we stepped outside, Luna handed me the black umbrella.

“Ah, sorry for that. Thanks, it’s very helpful, Luna.”

I said that while taking the umbrella, but Luna made a slightly surprised face.

She came all the way to my school to deliver an umbrella, so I thought it was at least appropriate to say thanks....well, it surely was a rare feat for me to thank someone honestly.

“I am glad.”

Luna nodded with a bright smile on her face. If she were a dog, she might’ve wagged her tail out of joy now. The reason I came up with that comparison was because she looked too happy.

That my simple thanks had made her so happy gave me a mixed feeling of joy and embarrassment. But when I looked at the smiling Luna beside me, I thought.

From now on I’ll be more honest with my gratitude.

I didn’t dislike seeing Luna smiling like that.

“Okay, Luna, let me give you a reward. Anything you want?”

As a first step, I proposed this as thanks for bringing me the umbrella. Luna pondered for a bit, then asked me “May I ask for something immaterial?”. I nodded generously.

Upon that, Luna turned red and said with a shy and quiet voice.

“...I want you to pat my head.”

“WHAT?”

I was so perplexed that I unintentionally spoke in English, but I had set my vow of more honesty only moments ago.

While playing it cool, I extended my hand towards Luna’s head and patted her slowly. Her hair felt different from Nazuna’s. The fragrance. The emerald green eyes looking up at me. Her red cheeks. Her well-formed, pink lips.

“...And done.”

“Eh, Ehh? I- It has no’t even been ten seconds yet! You are always patting

Nazuna-chan way longer!"

Luna looked at me sadly. I turned my back to her and said.

"I'll give you more on the WEB."

"I... I cannot use Mr. Computer."

"I'll teach you."

With my back still to her, I opened the umbrella and started to walk quickly. I couldn't look Luna straight in the eyes. Why was it so different compared to Nazuna and the girls in my class? It was quite troubling how my heartbeat strangely kept raising.

Avoiding eye-contact with Luna, who lined up next to me, I headed for the school gate, whereupon

"Mh?"

Suddenly a sense of discomfort pierced my body.

I frowned unintentionally.

The moment I stepped outside, the strange feeling of a searing pain in my neck struck me.

The atmosphere was particularly uncomfortable. A discomfort that felt like I was being watched by someone befell me.

And that discomfort grew stronger the closer I got to the school gate—

Then I noticed.

"...The rain has stopped?"

The rain that I was sure had poured down until moments ago, had abruptly stopped.

How strange.

I retracted the umbrella and looked up at the sky.... The clouds didn't move. The dark clouds had stopped moving like they had been blocked, not moving a single centimetre. And it wasn't just the clouds. There was no wind. There was no smell. There was no sound.

—The world had stopped as if it was in a deadlock.

I felt like I'd been thrown into a different world.

When I looked at Luna, she was looking around worried, since she'd probably felt the same as me.

"What's this?"

I spoke unintentionally.

"A barrier."

The answer came from behind me.

A firm voice. A sharp gaze. An obvious hostility.

I turned around and there stood Gogyou-san.

Gogyou-san opened the drawstring on her bamboo blade wrap in her hand

and pulled out a Japanese sword in it's sheath.

It was most likely real. The ominous looking pitch-black sheath made a rattling metallic sound.

"I knew it was strange. I've always felt this bad presence from you, Nanjou-kun. But you were too normal. You didn't do anything out of the ordinary. Your actions, your mind and your body were all that of a human's. Usually when one is possessed by a monster an abnormality is bound to appear in time. So I'd thought I was mistaken, but..."

While giving Luna a fierce glance, Gogyou-san said.

"Get away from Nanjou-kun, you monster."

Monster— On that word Luna's shoulders started to tremble lightly.

"I'm sure you came here to widen your hunting grounds, but...you chose the wrong place. Monster, I'll seal you right here."

Gogyou-san pulled her sword from the sheath and pointed it at Luna.

My body then moved on it's own.

"...Out of the way, Nanjou-kun."

Gogyou-san reprimanded me, who stood protectively in front of Luna.

"Nanjou-kun, you're being fooled by that monster. Try to recall it. Where'd you meet that monster? How did you get to know it? Why is it staying by your side? ...The place, the time and the reason, everything is vague to you, isn't it? That monster stayed at your house for no apparent reason, didn't it?"

Then Gogyou-san continued with "It's a common charm used by devils."

"That monster integrated itself into your family and got them to like her. Right? It's a common method of devils—in particular Vampires or Nightmares. Though there are some Japanese ogres who use charms too....It's mostly the former though."

Vampire? Nightmare? ....Luna is?

"The devils are after the souls of humans. To make their own soul more valuable, they steal human souls. A common practice among low level devils. That it came to school was probably so that it could get lots of souls." Take souls.... Luna will?

—For an instant I felt an intense headache.

Taking souls. These words triggered a memory.

Amidst the screeching pain in my head, I suddenly saw the image of a crying girl. A girl crying by herself. A girl with blonde hair and green eyes. That girl really resembled Luna...

"Stop it."

I looked at Luna behind me. As expected she was close to tears.

I didn't want to see such a sad face on her anymore.

I still couldn't remember Luna, but that's how I felt.

"Stop it, Gogyou-san."

"....Nanjou-kun. This matter doesn't concern only you."

Gogyou-san took one step forward, still looking grim.

"If that monster isn't satisfied with just your soul... A lot of other people will suffer."

Gogyou-san pulled out a piece of paper from her pocket. Complex characters covered the thick paper.

"It's a talisman."

Gogyou-san said briefly, before she faced me and threw the talisman. I could have dodged it easily. But I wasn't the target of the talisman to begin with. The talisman flying at me suddenly changed its direction towards Luna—Then exploded.

It was like an exploded balloon. The talisman split into small pieces.

"That talisman doesn't have any effect on humans. It only reacts to non-humans. Obviously, since it was created to exorcise devils."

Gogyou-san took another step forwards.

"I understand your disbelief, Nanjou-kun. But that's a devil. You're being fooled."

"...Fooled?"

My voice was shaking. Shaking from... anger.

Luna fooling me, as if something this stupid was possible.

Gogyou-san didn't know anything about Luna.

Whether it be that she'd been abandoned by her mother, the wound on her left hand or that she wasn't allowed to cry in front of others.

Not even that she cried out of happiness from a single phrase— Welcome home.

"....Don't set off the charge with the single word of devil."

Luna was a devil. Even if that was the truth, my feelings wouldn't change.

"She, Luna, is already part of my family. So Gogyou-san... stop it."

I felt Luna holding her breath behind me.

Don't worry, I'll protect you. Passionately I said to Gogyou-san.

"Gogyou-san, sorry, but I can't yield here. If you're going to lay your hands on Luna, I won't show you any mercy."

Then I ditched the umbrella and took a stance.

I lowered my hips into a defensive position. My left hand extended loosely and my right hand level with my navel, formed into a fist. Gogyou-san looked at my stance, changed her glance and said.

“...I see. I get it. It’s the influence from the devil. You’re not in your right mind, Nanjou-kun. Your mind is being violated by the devil’s charm.”

“So what?”

“I’ll just get rid of that monster.”

Simultaneously with her words, she dropped her hips, shouldered her sword and took a stance with the sword hidden behind her back.

That wasn’t a stance from kendo, but from swordsmanship. And a stance not to protect, but to kill.

While emitting an enormous aura, Gogyou-san took a step forward.

“Thou are the flame. Thou are the Fire God. Thou are the Fire Dragon...”

While she slowly raised her sword from behind her back, Gogyou-san mumbled a chant. With each verse the air around the tip of the blade started to flicker.

A natural sweat broke out on her forehead.

“Boil my blood. Stimulate my heartbeat. I’m Gogyou. The one who burns devils with flames. Answer my call.”

—Kagutsuchi of Fire!

The moment Gogyou-san finished chanting, her blade flashed and was engulfed by a pale flame.

“The flame of purification. With it I can release you from the devil that has possessed you, Nanjou-kun.”

Gogyou-san lightly swung her sword and the pale flame shot at the ground towards my feet.

The flame which grazed my knee was as hot as boiling water. But I frowned, as Gogyou-san told me.

“Rest assured. It’s a flame to exorcise devils, so it doesn’t harm humans. It just gives you a little burn.”

“...No, the burns aside, I’ll die if you cut me with that sword.”

“I’ll make it painless.”

Gogyou-san said that with a straight face.

This wasn’t good. A sword alone was already an advantage, but she also had flames on top of that. It was hopeless.

...I better run away.

The goal wasn’t to fight or to win, it was to protect.

For that, I would even throw away my little pride and run away from here with Luna. No, the best way would be to let Luna escape while acting as a decoy. But Luna surely wouldn’t accept that. I was sure she would say some stuff like “I cannot leave you behind, Shinobu-san.”.

I wondered what to do, whereupon Gogyou-san made my worrying

pointless by stepping forward and raising her sword again.

-At that moment.

—Wait!

Suddenly a dashing voice echoed through the area. I turned towards the source of the voice in surprise.

“What are you guys doing here!? This is a school! A place where you study!  
Not a place to fight!”

Despite the cool voice, the contents were pretty childish.

“Bad kids get detention! Got that!?”

An idiot tried to give a lecture. Yes, when I turned around, there was an idiot.

Silver twin tails. Big and pretty red eyes. A beautiful girl with a face like a doll.

The girl made a daunting pose on the concrete fence of the school gate, but for some reason she only appeared stupid. Even Luna and Gogyou-san, who had faced her way, couldn't say anything about her idiocy and just showed expressions of mixed feelings.

Not only did the girl not notice that, she also seemed to have misunderstood the gazes focused on her, so she mumbled “Seems like you would like to know who I am.”, spread her arms and shouted.

“Take a close look, all of you! For I am—- a Goddess! Okay, applause!”

The self-proclaimed Goddess asked for applause, but no one responded to her in the de-escalated situation. Saddened by that, the self-proclaimed Goddess said “...I'll cry.” with teary eyes. Out of pity Luna then gave her a moderate applause and Gogyou-san also joined in. Seeing that, the silver-haired and red-eyed albino girl Elni nodded satisfied. You might have forgotten, but Elni was the weird fellow that not long ago stole my hotdog and sexually harassed me over the phone. She appeared honest, but as soon as she started to speak her fatal idiocy revealed itself. A pitiful, but pretty girl.

I once again looked at Elni, who struck a pose on the fence. Like before, she was wearing her slobby yellow hoodie and for some reason she was holding a blue skateboard in her right hand.

“...Wh- Why is she here? Don't tell me she broke through the barrier?”

Gogyou-san looked dumbfounded at Elni. Then she made a surprised expression like her reasoning had returned. Elni answered her with a “Fufu”.

“A barrier? If you mean those pieces of paper, I ate them, since I was hungry!”

“Y- You’ll ruin your stomach, you know?”

The worried Gogyou-san said to Elni, who’d puffed up her chest with pride. Then Elni imitated the rumination of a goat with a “Mäh” and spit out a full piece of paper.

Impressive, Elni. Even Gogyou-san was surprised.

But did you know, Elni? While goats have the stereotype of eating paper, when you actually let them eat it, they can’t digest it and are in danger of having an intestinal obstruction.

Elni most likely didn’t know that. She made a face like she’d actually done something awesome.

“Yop!”

She jumped off the fence onto her skateboard, made a few turns and landed pompously. Then she skated towards us when....she lost her balance and fell down.

“D- Doesn’t hurt! It doesn’t hurt at all!”

Elni had fallen flat on her face, but she bravely raised her head and wiped away the tears at the corners of her eyes. She got back onto her skateboard and this time moved towards us more slowly. Then she shouted.

“Why didn’t you mail me, Shinobu!?”

I was surprised how I was reproached by the pouting Elni, out of the blue. Mail? What was she talking about?

“I was waiting for it! I finally bought a cell phone, so why are you being so indifferent!”

Cell phone? ...Ah, that reminds me. When I exchanged mail addresses with Elni at the department store, I told her “I’ll mail you.”, but I had always put it off.

“You’re so mean! You said you would send one, Shinobu! So mean! This is just too much! I was waiting for it the whole time! Can you imagine how sad I was?”

Elni got angry with tears in her eyes.

I certainly did something bad. When I was about to apologise honestly—Gogyou-san rushed over to Elni. Saying “It’s dangerous here, so get away.” she pushed Elni aside.

Gogyou-san probably didn’t put that much strength into it.

But Elni was still riding her skateboard, so like before she lost her balance and fell down. The back of her head hit the ground.

“Fueeh....”

That surely had to hurt, since tears welled up in her eyes.

“Are you okay?”

Luna's maternal instinct was probably triggered, as she approached Elni and gently brushed off the dust from her hair and clothes.

"Thanks."

"No problem."

They looked like mother and daughter.

"...Now then."

I raised my face and glared at Gogyou-san, who had taken the role of a bully.

"You're the worst, Gogyou-san."

"Ehh? S- Surely that was my bad, but, ehm, it wasn't on purpose...."

"Making excuses? That's not manly!"

"I'm a girl!"

I made her angry. And it seems she was seriously angry. Scary.

"Scary. This girl is so scary. She's a bully. She wants to resolve everything with violence. She's the worst."

"Indeed. Raising your hand against a Goddess is really the worst. That really hurt! And you call yourself an exorcist?"

The angry Elni hid behind my back in fear of the scary Gogyou-san.

"I heard that the exorcists from the Gogyou family were quite formidable and well-mannered, but what a disappointment! I'm really angry now! I'll spread the rumour that your family prostitutes themselves!"

"Okay, I'll help you. I'll also spread the rumour in school that Gogyou-san is a pervert."

"St- Stop it! I... I'm not really a pervert!"

Gogyou-san turned bright red.

"....Not really a pervert? Mm, suspicious. Right, Elni?"

"Pretty Perverts."

Elni made a weird interjection with a straight face and nodded.

Gogyou-san kept getting redder and after she denied it,

"Th- That aside, you know about us exorcists?"

She changed the topic. Elni nodded with a "Yeah", then continued.

"The exorcists' ancestor is Kamo. One of Kamo's apprentices specialised in flame exorcism. That was Gogyou, right?"

"How do you know that?"

"It's only obvious, since I'm a Goddess. A Goddess knows everything. I'm only bad at arithmetic."

Elni proudly answered the bewildered Gogyou-san.

At least call it mathematics, was my inner retort.

"But what business does a Gogyou exorcist have with this blonde beauty?

She is something like a guardian spirit that I gave to Shinobu, you know?"

There is no reason to get rid of her."

Elni said something unbelievable while Luna was watching.

Hold it. Luna was a guardian spirit? And from Elni? That means the ring I'm wearing right now was used to summon Luna? If that was true...

I looked at Elni, who was patting the bump on the back of her head with teary eyes.

Could she actually be someone really impressive?

I was bewildered by the shocking truth.

"Then you made that monster possess Nanjou-kun?"

Gogyou-san's expression had changed upon Elni's word. Speaking in a low voice, she glared at Elni. Then Elni tilted her head and asked "Monster?".

"What nonsense are you spouting? I'm a Goddess, you know? I'm amazing, you know? I'm grateful to Shinobu, who treated me to food. There's no way I'd stick a monster to—"

Elni mumbled displeased while staring at Luna, then

"U- Uwah! Sh- She's a devil!"

She shouted while she became rigid out of horror.

"And she isn't one of those low level devils! Wh- Who summoned this devil!? Such a strong devil would usually be repelled by the barrier of the human world and not be able to enter! Just who summoned her!!"

Gogyou-san gave the flared up Elni a fierce glare. People call it a killing intent.

Elni quite likely noticed Gogyou-san's glare, as she started to break out in a cold sweat.

"...R- Right. I was the one who did it. B- But such stuff can happen, right?"

Elni was appealing to her sympathy, but Gogyou-san just silently approached with her sword in hand.

"Wa, Wawah. H- Hold it. Let's talk this out!"

Once again Elni hid behind my back. Then

"D- Don't you care what will happen to him?"

I was taken hostage.

Quite the guts she's got, seriously.

"Don't move an inch! E- Ehm, or I'll k- kiss him!"

Elni said with a flushed face while bringing her face closer to mine. To that "Th- That will not do! Please let Shinobu-san go!"

Luna shouted desperately for some reason.

When I looked at Gogyou-san, she had stopped with a face that said that she didn't know what to do.

"D- Don't move. Or don't you care about Shinobu's lips?"

“P- Please stop it. Please do not be so cruel to Shinobu-san. Ah, just now you touched his lips! You touched them with your finger! So cruel! No fair. I am so envious.”

Elni was touching my lips and cheek as she pleased, while Luna protested.  
“Uh- Uhm...”

“D- Do not move, please! Do you really not care what is going to happen to him?”

Luna cried out in tears when Gogyou-san took a step forwards.

The strange vigour of it made Gogyou-san apologise with a “S- Sorry”.

“Fufufu. I could buy enough time. I made a crack in the barrier, so that over time it would break. Then the dangerous girl with the sword will be exposed to everyone’s eyes!”

Elni said terrible things with an “all according to my plan”.

But I have to say, I was a bit amazed by the feeling of the close contact, for a while now.

Since she’d hugged onto me from behind, two soft and small bulges were directly pressed against my back. Likewise Elni was emitting a sweet fragrance.

“Fuh.”

I took a small breath, turned around and tore off Elni, who had rested her chin on my shoulder. Then I extended my hand and picked up Elni by strongly grabbing her neck.

“Wah. Wh- Why are you holding me like a cat all of a sudden? If you want to hug, then do it properly from the front.”

I ignored Elni, who’d spread both her arms, and approached Gogyou-san. I went behind Gogyou-san, who was totally confused by this bizarre scene, and slowly put Elni on.... that defenceless back of hers.

“There we go. Okay, Gogyou-san, the rest is up to you.”

“Eh? Uh- Uhm, what am I supposed to do?”

Gogyou-san turned her head and looked back and forth between Elni, who’d clung to her back like a koala, and I while making a troubled expression.

Looking at this situation, I put my hand on Elni’s head and shouted.

“Now, Elni! Your secret move, the snake hold!”

“Righto~!”

She probably meant to mimic a snake. Elni raised a cute voice, then twirled around Gogyou-san using both her arms and legs. Upon Elni’s snake hold, Gogyou-san turned red and squalled “Wawah. Not my breasts”.

“You were careless, Gogyou-san.”

I said triumphantly and headed back to Luna.

“Okay, time to bug off.”

“EHH?”

I didn't even notice that Elni and Gogyou-san had raised surprised voices in perfect unison. I just ran away, like I had intended from the very beginning. Taking Luna's hand, we sprinted away, leaving the other two behind.

“Sh- Shinobu, you traitor! Leaving me behind, so cruel! Next time, I'll just impose on your house and eat all of your side-dishes for dinneeeeer!!”

Behind me, Elni shouted “Idiot~!” and Gogyou-san “W- Wait!”.

Obviously ignoring them, Luna and I ran for the school gate.

Gogyou-san didn't chase us.

As I found that strange, I turned around and saw Elni desperately clinging to Gogyou-san.

She said all those things, but she still helped in our escape.

“I'll treat you to something again.”

Quietly mumbling that, I rushed out the school gate while still holding onto Luna's hand.

\* \* \*

“We should be fine now after running this far.”

Looking behind us, I slowed my pace.

Like Elni had said, the barrier was broken and we could leave the school grounds normally.

Surely Gogyou-san wouldn't swing around her sword on the streets.

“...Well then, let's go home.”

I said to Luna beside me, but there was no reaction.

“Looks like the rain has stopped. And you went to all the trouble to bring me an umbrella.”

When I looked up, the dark clouds were still there, but it wasn't raining anymore.

Since I threw away my umbrella, this was actually for the better....

I looked at Luna, who was walking while staring at the ground.

I could immediately tell what was on her mind.

I'm sure she was regretting it. Coming to school. Delivering the umbrella. Coming to see me.

It must have been quite the shock for her to have me know that she's a devil.

She didn't raise her head for the whole time.

Since it's her, she was probably thinking that I'd hate her now.

I re-adjusted my grip on her hand.

I was bad at conveying my honest feelings.  
But I wanted to convey it to her, who still had a teary look and wouldn't raise her head.

"Luna."

Luna raised her head and I said a simple phrase.

"Stay by my side."

I tightly grabbed her hand. I gently squeezed it so that my feelings would be conveyed. I grabbed her hand because I wanted her to stay by my side.  
For a moment Luna cast her eyes down, bit her lip and clenched her fists.

Then

"....Yes."

She raised her head and nodded while tears flowed down her face.

She no longer had to hold back her tears.

Her teary voice. The warmth coming from her hand. Her happy smile.

Even while crying, Luna smiled.

That was enough for me.

My feelings hadn't changed. I wanted to protect her. No matter what happens.

How strange. It was like I'd had these feelings since a long time ago.

I wonder why I was so proud of myself?

I didn't know. I really didn't know, but at that moment I was sure that I was happy.

As long as I could hold her hand like this forever.

Back then I had also wished—

"Uh!"

For a second, a pain ran through my head. I stopped abruptly and Luna stopped too.

Then she suddenly tightened the grip on my hand.

"....What's up?"

When I peeked at her face, it was frozen stiff.

Finding it strange, I followed her gaze.

"Bats...?"

Like they were blocking our way, the bats had spread their wings.

Their numbers easily exceeded ten and were steadily increasing.

In mere seconds, the surroundings were covered by bats.

"What the."

It felt like every single bat held a killing intent towards me. It was creepy.

I pulled Luna's hand and turned on my heels— I held my breath.

When did he get behind us? A tall and gaunt man was standing there. He

wore a black coat and had flaming long, red hair. His eyes were amber-coloured. His white skin and facial features made him look abnormally inhuman.

“You’re in the way, human.”

He gave me a fierce glare, so I stepped back unintentionally, when—— I was attacked. Before I noticed it, a pain was already running through my back.

...I was blown away? I felt the hard concrete fence on my back and opened my eyes.

“Shinobu-san!”

Luna rushed over to me and extended her hand, but it didn’t reach. The man grabbed Luna’s hand and pulled her close to him.

“Luna. Stop getting involved with that human. That guy is no good. You’ll only get hurt.”

“Please let me go!”

Luna desperately tried to shake off the man, but their difference in strength was obvious. She couldn’t escape the arms of the man.

“It’s no use. Did you forget already? You’ve lost your powers because of him. The demonic realm aside, you can’t use your original powers in the human world.”

Then the man looked at me directly for the first time.

I could see an obvious killing intent in his anger-filled eyes.

“That boy is the kid from seven years ago, right? Why are you so concerned about him? Why won’t you take his soul? Why did you leave him be for seven years? You granted his wish, right?”

Seven years ago? Soul? My wish?

Together with a headache, an image suddenly floated into my head.

A girl lying in blood. Shaking fingers. My crying self.

“Is the memory manipulation intact? You don’t seem to remember it.”

When I looked up, the man was looking down at me with his enraged eyes.

“Like I thought, you’re also hurting Luna.”

Don’t screw with me. When I tried to get up to oppose him,

“Gah!”

My body was pushed down on the ground immediately.

I looked behind me and saw a couple of bats sticking to my body and were holding me down. Then the bats swarmed together and finally formed two silhouettes.

A man and woman in full black.

Devils. That word echoed in my head.

“Bram-sama, what do we do with this guy?”

“Shall we dispose of him?”

The man and woman asked while they held me down by my arms.

The man called Bram looked at Luna, then....sighed and said.

“Leave him be. There’s no need to kill him.”

That was all.

Without even giving me a second glance, he turned his back to me and was about to leave with Luna.

Fuck that. You think I would allow that?

Luna turned around and looked at me. She was close to tears again.

What was I doing? Didn’t I swear that I would protect her no matter what?

“Get awaaaay!”

I howled and threw off the devils with all my strength.

I gave the two surprised devils a wry look and chased after Bram.

With an explosive acceleration I closed the distance and threw a punch at his face. But,

“Guh.”

Right before my fist hit Bram’s face, I received an attack to my stomach.

Bram hadn’t moved. Then where did it come from?

Bram moved faster than I could think.

He let go of Luna’s hand and raised his right hand loosely.

In that moment, I felt a punch on my face. In the next moment I was looking up at the sky. When I shook my head and took a stance it was already too late. I was pierced by a strong, invisible “something” in the stomach.

“Gah.”

When I groaned, I received an attack to my chin from below. My body was thrown back by the force of it. I knew that wasn’t good, but it was already too late.

Unable to cushion my fall, I suffered a dull pain on the back of my head.

When I opened my eyes, my vision was blurred.

In my blurred vision, I could see Bram raising his hand again.

I put strength into my shaking legs and forced myself to stand up. I prepared for the attack— but couldn’t avoid it.

After the sharp sound of something cutting through the air, my face was struck. I was down on my knees.

My vision was blurred, my legs were shaking. The pain felt distant as my consciousness faded away.

When I received the next attack, my vision got filled with the dark cloudy sky. I forcibly stopped my body from falling backwards and could barely

stand. I didn't have any strength. I couldn't prevent my body from falling over.

"Please stop it already, Father!"

Before I collapsed, I could hear Luna's outcry with my numb ears.

"....Luna."

I looked up... and saw Luna crying.

In the blurred scenery, I seemed to see that quite clearly for some reason.

Aw, I have to protect her. As my consciousness slowly faded away I extended my hand—but it couldn't reach.

The powerless arm couldn't grasp anything.

Their backs faded into the distance. Luna was leaving. She was crying.

The last thing I saw with my fading consciousness was Luna's crying face.

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## Chapter 05: The promise from seven years ago

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Since birth, she'd been bullied by everyone in the village, since she was the daughter of a prostitute.

But no matter how much she was bullied, she never called for help. She never cried for help.

Daughter of a whore, daughter of a slut, an impure girl...No matter how badly she'd been insulted, she'd force herself to smile and forgave them. But in reality she wanted someone to help her. She wanted to be held. She wanted to be loved.

Crying all alone, the girl prayed to God. She asked for love. She naively served God and dedicated herself to only do good. She believed that some day, someone would accept her.

—But one day, there came a change for the girl.

The pest spread into the village of the girl during a certain year.

The villagers despaired. Those around them kept on dying one after another. That despair made the villagers become insane. Vampires, Witches, Devils— Those were the scapegoats.

To appease the despair in the their hearts, the villagers had searched for a human sacrifice.

The very first human sacrifice was the girl.

The villagers fell into a group hysteria and lit the church, where the girl lived, on fire. While shouting angrily, while shouting insults, while laughing, they insanely declared.

If they come from God, they will not burn. If they come the Devil, they will burn to ashes.

The girl was scared. Because of her, the church was burned and the Sisters, who didn't have a chance to escape, were also enveloped by the flames. In desperation, the girl vehemently wished that the Sisters would be saved.

That the fire would stop.

—Then a miracle happened. Light gleamed from the girl's left hand. The girl felt a burning pain and brought her left hand towards her eyes. Her skin was torn in a cross-shape and blood was flowing out.

It was a stigma. The wounds Christ suffered at the crucifixion appearing on her body was a sacred phenomena.

The girl was chosen by God.

Now she could save everyone.

The girl rejoiced and stopped the spreading fire on the church with the guidance of that power. The girl simply wanted to protect her home and the Sisters.

But the villagers, who'd witnessed this miracle, shouted together.

She's a devil. They told the girl that she was a real devil.

A witch trial was started for the girl. That was the thanks she got for her good deed.

So the girl, with her new powers, escaped and left her birthplace behind her.

The girl still hadn't given up. She believed that as long as she continued with her good deeds, someone would need her, someone would repay her with kindness.

From then on, the long journey of the girl started. The girl visited all kinds of place around the world and continued to spread kindness.

But due to her powers and her unaging body, people called her that word again.

—Devil.

The girl just wanted to be needed by someone. She wanted to be smiled at. That was all. For just that, she kept on helping people and was hated as a devil.

Not giving up, the girl kept on wishing.

Yet that small wish, the girl's little dream was never fulfilled.

God didn't turn to the girl. The girl was only granted that power. The people didn't turn to the girl either. They only feared her as a devil..... The only one who turned to the girl was a weird devil.

The devil advised the girl and took her from the human world into the demonic realm. And sure enough, there wasn't anyone who scorned the girl in the demonic realm.

But I couldn't help but shout.

You idiot, I shouted until my throat was hoarse.

—That was the story of a single girl. The story of a girl, who was abandoned by her mother on a night with a full moon.

The story of a girl, who had no choice but to become a devil, since no one needed her.

\* \* \*

“...Mh?”

I suddenly regained consciousness.

“...Oh? You’re up?”

When I opened my eyes, I saw Elni’s face. As I came to, I felt a warm and soft sensation on the back of my head. I noticed that I was resting on Elni’s lap.

“Are you okay?”

When I faced the owner of the voice, I found Gogyou-san looking at me. She had a worried expression. Her long eyelashes and finely chiselled features filled my vision.

I wordlessly stood up and looked around.

I was at a riverbank. The river was flowing peacefully in front of me.

Why was I here?

“—!”

As I stood up I realised it.

I remembered Luna’s crying face.

“What’s the matter, Nanjou-kun?”

Gogyou-san asked me, a bit worried as I had gotten up so suddenly.

“...Just what happened? On my way home, I was talking with Elni, when we saw you collapsed by the road. That was a real surprise. Could it be that devil did something to you?”

“Not so hasty, Hijiri. I fear Shinobu did something to make her angry. Maybe he couldn’t hold back anymore and fondled her boobies?”

“H- Hey, Elni, why are you trying to touch my breasts?”

Elni was playing around by hugging Gogyou-san from behind.

It seemed like in the time that they were alone, their relationship had deepened to the point of calling each other by their first name.

But meanwhile I was....

“...took her away.”

I clenched my fist.

“A devil. A devil took Luna away.”

Listening to my words, Gogyou-san and Elni made bewildered expressions.

“Is that true, Shinobu?”

When I nodded, both Elni and Gogyou-san tilted their heads.

“That’s strange.”

“What is?”

“Well, if you think about it rationally, it’s rather strange for a devil to come to the human world to bring back a fellow devil. I don’t see any reason in that.”

Gogyou-san nodded in agreement with Elni’s words.

“I would understand giving a hand in taking the soul, but....You were left behind, Nanjou-kun. So the goal really was to get her back...? But I don’t get

why they would break through a powerful barrier just for that.”

According to Elni and Gogyou-san, there were great risks involved for devils who come here by breaking through the barrier of the human world. If they forced their way through, they would lose a major part of their powers and couldn’t use their original powers in the human world. And if they were found by an exorcist like Gogyou-san, they were in real trouble.

Therefore, devils had to rely on being summoned by a human.

That devil— Bram shouldered that huge risk to bring back Luna. There had to be a reason for it.

“....Reminds me, Luna called him “Father”.”

“Mh? The father of the Blondie came by?”

“....At least Luna called him that.”

Luna surely had called that red-haired devil, Bram, her father.

While Bram had taken Luna away by force, his words towards her were filled with affection, while towards me he only bore a strong hostility.

—The kid from seven years ago.

His eyes were filled with hatred for me.

“But didn’t it turn out alright?”

Gogyou-san said calmly when I’d raised my head.

“Now you’re freed from that devil, right?”

“Oh, right. Good for you, Shinobu.”

Gogyou-san and Elni kept saying “Good for you”.

....Good for me, you say?

“It was strange to begin with. The ring I gave you links a guardian spirit to the wearer based on their relationship with it, so usually it would give you an ancestor or animal as a guardian spirit.... But I wonder why you got a devil?”

Tilting her head, Elni continued.

“When I first saw you, it didn’t seem like you had any form of relationship with a devil. I was happy that you treated me to food, so I really wanted to grant you a guardian spirit..... But, I’m sorry. I ended up giving you a devil. I’m really sorry.”

Elni said while deeply lowering her head.

“I’ll give you a proper guardian spirit next. I’ll give you the perfect guardian spirit that’s beautiful, refined and will make you happy just by being by your side.”

“Don’t need it.”

Elni offered merrily, but I declined outright.

“I don’t want something like that. I only want Luna.”

It was no lie that I wanted her by my side.

So no one could replace her.

“...Hey, Elni. You said the ring links the wearer with the spiritual guardian based on their relationship, but what if Luna and I have some kind of relationship—”

“Did you ever make a contract with a devil? It sure doesn’t feel like you have.”

Elni interrupted me.

Certainly, I didn’t remember making a contract with Luna. But that didn’t change my opinion.

I had the feeling that I had met Luna before already.

“Reminds me...”

Gogyou-san had stayed quiet so far, when she suddenly asked.

“Nanjou-kun, you said you summoned a devil in the past. Do you think that’s related?”

—The kid from seven years ago.

Immediately a pain ran through my head.

In the past, yes, seven years ago something happened.

Whenever I tried to remember, a strong headache hindered my ability to think clearly.

“Guh.”

A pain that felt like my head was splitting brought me to my knees. But enduring it, I climbed up the bank. Then I headed for the closest big tree trunk— and hit my head against it with all my might.

“Nanjou-kun!”

I heard Gogyou-san’s shocked voice, but I continued to hit my head against the trunk regardless. After a few more times, the skin on my forehead split and blood gushed out, but the turmoil in my mind, that had been brought about by the agonising headache, was gone.

My mind was surprisingly clear.

Along with the headache, came a flood of memories.

The screeching of brakes. A small silhouette blown away. Red blood. Empty words. Sobbing tears. My own wet cheeks. The warmth of a hand on my head. A gentle warmth. A gentle smile. Gentle words. A sad smile. Sad eyes. Two small hands that were so sadly powerless.

Seeing a girl crying by herself— I wanted to protect her, so I undoubtedly extended my hand.

“Nanjou-kun!”

“Shinobu!”

When I came to, Gogyou-san and Elni were supporting my body.

“What are you doing out of the blue!? Are you okay? Aww, you’re bleeding!”

“Shinobu, does it hurt? Are you okay? Why would you do that?”

Looking at the panicked Gogyou-san and Elni, I put my back against the tree trunk and slid down, as I let out a big sigh.

Ahh, I see.

...I remembered everything. I wondered why I had forgotten it.

Yeah, I had met Luna in my childhood.

“....Hey, I have a little sister, you know...”

When I suddenly started talking, Elni and Gogyou-san looked at each other, but didn’t stop me. They both closed their mouths and to urge me to go on, they stared at me.

Thanks. I’ll tell you everything.

I wanted to put them into words. Give them shape. All of them, my precious memories....I didn’t want to forget them again.

“She’s a weird sister. Ever since I gave her a cat plush-toy as a birthday present when she was small, she came to really love cats. Wherever she went, whatever she did, she was always happily hugging onto the cat plush-toy, since it’s from me.”

It was a cheap plush-toy, but she treasured it immensely.

“But she’s an idiot. One day she lost it somewhere. She wouldn’t stop crying and apologising. So our father and I desperately searched for it, until we found it.... and gave it back to her.”

The cat plush-toy was a bit dirty and the right arm was torn. But still,

“She was overjoyed. She tightly hugged onto it and wouldn’t let it

go....That’s when it started. That she became practically glued to my back.”

She always followed me with a smile and saying “Brother, brother”.

“But one day I was teased for it by my friends and got embarrassed. So I told my sister not to follow me anymore. But she didn’t listen to me.”

She followed behind me with a teary face.

“I was so stupid....I wanted to play a prank on her. Knowing that she wouldn’t be able to keep up with me, I started running. I heard a ‘Brother’ behind me, but ignored it and ran.... I was just so stupid.”

I should have just walked with her hand-in-hand.

“....It happened when I’d crossed the crosswalk. I heard the loud sound of a brake from behind me.”

The foreboding sound of brakes screeching.

“I had a bad feeling, so I turned around immediately. And there....a small silhouette flew through the air and fell limp on the ground.”

My mind went blank and I couldn’t breathe anymore.

“I rushed over in a panic. My sister was bleeding from the head and lying limply on the ground. I was scared. I knew I had to do something, but couldn’t. The fear had paralysed my legs, so all I could do was shout ‘Nazuna’, the name of my sister.”

Red blood. Her small body that wouldn’t move at all. The cat plush-toy she still held in her arms.

“When I called her name, she said with cloudy eyes. Maybe her mind was too hazy or she didn’t understand the situation she was in...but with a small voice she said.”

—Mr. Cat, I didn’t drop you this time.

“That was all. She only said that, then lost consciousness and kept on sleeping. The doctor at the hospital, which she was sent to, ambiguously called it a vegetative state.”

I couldn’t stop my tears.

“After that, my sister stayed asleep. After one month, after two months; she still wouldn’t wake up.”

No one blamed me. Only I kept blaming myself.

“I could only turn to God. But no matter how much I prayed, God didn’t answer me.”

So I....

“I didn’t care who it was, as long as they would grant my wish. So even a devil was fine. I just wanted to save my sister. That’s why I decided to summon a devil.”

I’d been ready to give my soul in exchange for Nazuna’s recovery.

“In my desperate attempt, I used a black magic book to summon a devil, but the devil I summoned was far from what I’d imagined. I told the devil about my sister and without saying anything the devil healed Nazuna. Then the devil patted my head and said.”

—It’s okay. It’s all okay now.

“The devil didn’t ask for my soul. It just smiled at me and left.”

I was happy. Nazuna smiled again. Hugging the plush-toy, she smiled again.

“The demon, who helped me... helped my sister, was Luna.”

To that Gogyou-san and Elni opened their eyes widely.

“I made a promise with Luna.”

Yes, a promise. On the day Luna saved Nazuna, I wanted to thank her in some way. I wanted to see her again.

But when that wish was granted and I met her again—  
I strongly clenched my fists as I remembered about it.  
I remembered my vow.

—I'll stay with you. I'll protect you.

Those were my feelings back then and even now. Therefore  
“I want to save Luna. Please help me.”

I lowered my head to Gogyou-san.

It was frustrating, but my strength alone wasn't enough to save Luna.  
“You're an exorcist, aren't you? Can't you find out Luna's whereabouts?”  
“....I certainly have a spell for that.”

“Then please. Please get me Luna's whereabouts with that.”

I grabbed Gogyou-san's shoulders with both hands and begged her  
vehemently.

“Under one condition.”

“Condition?”

I repeated back, like a parrot, when Gogyou-san said with her usual frigid  
expression.

“I'll come with you. That's the only condition.”

When I stared at her wide-eyed unintentionally, Gogyou-san gave me a faint  
smile.

“I can't let you go alone after all.”

....Why was she just so damn cool?

While I was fascinated by her smile, Gogyou-san pulled something out of  
her pocket. It was a black sphere, which was the size of a golf ball.

Gogyou-san chanted something like a spell and the sphere started to glow.  
Then it opened in the middle and turned into something that looked like a  
compass.

“It's a compass. I can discover a devil's location with this.”

Resting the compass on her palm, she continued with a “But”.

“It doesn't pinpoint the location, but only points towards the general  
direction and gives an estimate of the distance. So it might take some time  
to actually find her.”

When Gogyou-san said that, Elni stepped forward with her chest puffed out.

“It seems my type is in demand here.”

“...We've had enough gags already.”

I said wearily, when Elni pouted.

“Shinobu, even I want to act cool! If you keep being mean, I'll cry!”

Already half in tears, Elni put her right hand over the compass and shouted.

“Gununuh, God Poweeeeer! In Swahili it's—BRAAAH!”

While adding some completely fake Swahili, Elni roared, when something surprising happened.

The compass in Gogyou-san's hand suddenly started moving on its own.

While spinning around, it floated up into the air.

"How's that! I infused the compass with my God Power! Now it can pinpoint a devil's location! Great, isn't it, Shinobu? Praise me!"

Perhaps reacting to Elni's words, the compass started moving slowly.

So, if we chased after the compass, we'd find Luna?

"...Amazing."

Gogyou-san said, astonished, and Elni answered "I'm a Goddess after all!" with her chest puffed out.

"Goddesses sure are amazing. Elni, try to spit some fire from your mouth."

Hearing my words, Elni shouted an "Okay!" and approached Gogyou-san.

"Elni Fire~"

She mumbled erotically and puffed into Gogyou-san's ear with a "Fuh~".

"Hyan"

Gogyou-san let out a cute voice in surprise.



“Hijirin’s weak spot is her ears.”

“E- Elni, don’t do anything weird. C- C’mom, let’s go.”

The bright-red Gogyou-san started following the compass. Elni also followed while saying “I want to touch Hijirin’s earlobe.”

—Wait for me, Luna.

I mumbled in my mind and followed after them both.

\* \* \*

“There, huh.”

The place we followed the compass to, was the ruins of a building outside the town, which was known as a spiritual place. I heard that in the past it had been a hospital, but now it had a gloomy aura. Nothing less from a spiritual place.

“So gloomy...”

Gogyou-san murmured and Elni nodded.

“Right the place that ghosts and devils prefer. It’s full of blood, sadness and hatred. Devils might like this place, but I’m a Goddess, so I don’t really like it.”

As if scared by the gloomy atmosphere, Elni clung to Gogyou-san. Then she touched her ear. Gogyou-san didn’t like that. I pulled Elni away from Gogyou-san and looked back at the ruins....

Then I noticed it.

“Seems that Luna is here without a doubt.”

Seeing silhouettes by the entrance, I was certain.

A man and woman in full black.

Most likely they were Bram’s companions.

They were guarding the entrance.

“These two are devils.”

“The woman’s got big boobies.”

After Gogyou-san, Elni made a nonsensical interjection with a straight face.

“....Luna’s inside, huh.”

I ignored Elni and was going to head for the devils, when

“Nanjou-kun, wait. What’s your plan?”

“Plan? These two are devils. No other choice but to kick their asses.”

I turned around and answered like that to Gogyou-san, who tried to stop me by holding my arm.

“...Shinobu, they’ve already beaten you before, right?”

Elni made a wry expression.

“No, they didn’t beat me. I merely tripped and fell down.”

“Shinobu, making excuses is lame, you know?”

“Shut up. I’m going. That’s what I’m here for.”

I tried to shake off Gogyou-san’s arm, but

“No.”

Gogyou-san didn’t let me.

While still holding onto my arm, Gogyou-san said with a straight look.

“I’ll go.”

Ignoring my surprise, Gogyou-san pulled her bamboo sword pouch from her back and continued.

“I’ll take care of these two. You get in from the back, Nanjou-kun. With this you’ll find her in no time.”

Gogyou-san said and handed me the compass.

I was perplexed by her unusual behaviour, as she suddenly lowered her head.

“....Gogyou-san?”

“It might not be right to apologise to you, but let me do it anyway. I was mistaken. After hearing your story, I realised that. That person—Luna-san is certainly a devil, but...not the kind that I thought she was. I said some cruel things. I want to apologise for it.”

To Gogyou-san, who had lowered her head, I said—

“If you truly feel sorry, then lick my glorious butt.”

“Yeah, my glorious butt—wait, what the?”

Who was mimicking me and saying weird stuff?

...No, there wasn’t really a need to ask who it was. I glared at Elni sinisterly.

“J- Just a joke. You know, since Hijiri was so serious, I wanted to brighten up the atmosphere with a gag, so that she wouldn’t be that worried about it anymore.”

I see, a joke. The serious Gogyou-san became all red and troubled by saying “B- Butt?”. What to do about that?

“Gogyou-san.”

“Y- Yes!”

Maybe she took Elni’s imitation seriously, as she spoke nervously.

I let out a small sigh, then faced Gogyou-san once again.

“I told you before that Luna saved my sister. I’ll ask you again. Please help me.”

This time, I lowered my head.

“Leave it to me.”

Gogyou-san nodded firmly.

“Okay, Shinobu, I’ll help Hijiri, so you go on ahead. If it gets dangerous, just

call my name, okay? I'll come flying immediately."

Elni said, relaxed and smiling.

"Will you be fine?"

From her looks, she looked totally unsuited for battle.

"Don't worry, Shinobu. I'm a Goddess, you know? No problem. You better worry about yourself. Don't collapse until we get there."

Elni said frivolously, then walked away beside Gogyou-san.

Then she raised her right arm vertically and gave me a thumbs up.

For some reason that was strangely cool.

"Thanks."

I muttered quietly and headed for the back entrance.

Shortly after, I was startled by a cracking sound behind me, but without turning back, I continued to follow the compass.

I had to advance. Just believe in Gogyou-san and Elni, and advance.

\* \* \*

I heard a voice.

The compass stopped moving in the middle of the third floor of the ruins. I felt a presence beyond the door. I slowly opened the door and took a peek inside. It had probably been a lounge before. In the vast room—I saw them. Luna and Bram.

The two were talking about something.

What was it? I listened intently and focused on their voices.

"....Father. I will not go back. I want to stay here."

"Is it that boy? Did that boy summon you again? Do you still believe in him?"

"Yes. Shinobu-san told me to stay by his side. So I—"

"Stop it."

Bram interrupted her and strongly expressed his words.

"Luna, stop getting involved with that boy. He's only after your powers anyway. Just like seven years ago. That boy took away your powers. On the first summoning, we lend them our powers, but it's different for the second. If I hadn't manipulated his memories, you would have become his slave, you know? You were about to.... be betrayed again."

I heard Bram's voice filled with anger.

Manipulated memories. Bram's words echoed in my head.

I see. So these headaches were from Bram's spell.

...Well, understandable. Now that I remembered everything, I understood.

I looked at Luna, who faced Bram with her fists still clenched.

It's okay now. I'm coming for you.

I took a big breath, clenched my fists—and kicked open the door in front of me.

The door was blown away by my kick and made a loud noise as it fell into the room. Luna and Bram looked at me, who stood before the collapsed door.

“...Shinobu-san?”

Luna made a surprised expression.

“Yeah, it’s me, Shinobu-san. I came to get you, Luna.”

I answered, lightly raising my hand.

“What are you here for, human?”

When I faced towards the voice, Bram was glaring at me with eyes filled with anger. I winced at that overwhelming pressure. My instincts warned me of danger, but I ignored it and took a step forward.

“I came to get Luna back. Get in my way and I’ll punch you.”

“...I see. Then disappear.”

Bram muttered quietly and swung his right hand.

In that moment, “something” came flying at me with the sharp sound of it cutting through the air.

Yes, I could tell by the sound and distortion in the air.

I couldn’t see it, but I could feel it.

I sharpened my five senses.

“Rwaar!”

I stepped forwards with my left leg, twisted my waist and struck the shockwave from below at an angle with the bottom of my left palm, knocking it away. The shockwave passed behind me and hit something, with a loud noise.

“...Wha.”

He probably hadn’t expected me to redirect it. Bram’s expression changed.

“The same trick won’t work on me twice.”

While I gave him a fearless smile at the front, a cold sweat ran down my back.

The shockwave had been stronger than I had expected. If I hadn’t properly hit its centre, I wouldn’t have been able to redirect it.

What’s more, if he’d shot them at me repeatedly, I would’ve been done for.

But—

“Shinobu-san!”

Luna was going to rush over to me, but I stopped her with my right hand.

“Luna, you stay there and watch.”

I’ll prove it to you.

I'll prove that I'm strong enough to protect you.

"I'll protect you."

I said with a smile.

"I promised, right?"

For a moment, tears welled up in Luna's eyes.

Sorry. Sorry for forgetting until now. But I remembered now and wouldn't forget it again.

I shifted my gaze back to Bram, who had changed his stance. His right hand was extended like he was going to pierce something.

It looked like he was planning to go all out.

"Ooohhh!"

I roared, then strongly kicked off the ground and rushed at Bram.

He immediately sent a shockwave towards my face, but I tilted my head and avoided the attack. Next he aimed for my chest, which I avoided by bending my body. Without pause, he then aimed at my legs.

I couldn't dodge it completely.

Protecting the centre of my body with the vital organs-- the median plane, I took a half-crouched stance and continuously avoided any attacks at my vital organs. Using my fists, arms, knees, elbows and shoulders I pulverised the shockwaves and drew closer and closer to Bram.

"Guah!"

I was nearly blown backwards by a shockwave, but I stood strong and advanced further.

Luna was watching. Without even blinking, she was looking at me full of worry.

I couldn't afford to stop. I couldn't afford to fall. I couldn't afford to lose.

"...Why would you go so far, human?"

Bram suddenly asked me. He looked at me with a strange expression that was beyond his control.

"Isn't it obvious?"

While spitting out blood, I shouted.

"Because I promised!"

Yes, I promised.

Seven years ago, when Luna saved Nazuna, I'd wanted to do something for her as thanks.

....No, actually I'd just wanted to see Luna again.

I liked her. I wanted to meet the gentle devil that saved my sister again.

So I summoned Luna once again.

But the summoning failed. I made a mistake.

I used a possessive summoning, a spell to make a devil's power one's own and to exorcise them.

Through that I got a glimpse into Luna's memories.

A girl abandoned by her mother. A girl cursed as a devil. A girl that had no other choice but to become a devil, since nobody had extended a hand towards her.

....The person, who helped me, had cried. She'd always been crying by herself.

But all I could do was watch. I couldn't call out to her. It was just too sad.

So I'd thought that I'll protect her from now on.

So I extended my hand towards Luna. I had told her not to cry anymore, since I would protect her now. And that she should stay by my side and not cry alone anymore. I extended my hand towards her.

But my hand was powerless. I had ended up letting go of the hand I'd grasped onto.

But even though I'd let go of her, Luna had told me.

I will come to see you again. I will definitely come. And at that time...

—Please let me stay at your side forever.

Yeah, right.

She'd been hurt more than anyone and had always been crying alone, but she showed me a gentle smile. And she saved Nazuna.... So I wanted to get stronger.

I had always trained, so that next time I could protect her, so that next time I wouldn't let go of her hand, so that next time I wouldn't lose to the opponent in front of me.

The reason I'd started martial arts, even though I had no talent for it---was so that I could protect her.

“UWRAAR!”

The closer I drew to Bram, the more shockwaves that were sent at me.

It was like a heavy gale. If I was careless for even a second, I would surely be blown away.

Still, I advanced. I couldn't afford to stop until I smacked him at least once.

“...Give up, human. Or you'll die.”

Bram looked at me with an expression that said that he still had strength to spare.

I hated him. It was the same seven years ago. Easily blowing me away, tampering with my memories and taking away Luna. I'm sure he thinks it's all for Luna's sake. But

“You idiot!”

I couldn't help but shout!

"You're mistaken, old man. You might think you're protecting Luna, but you're only hurting her. It was you, who brought her to the demonic realm, right?"

You couldn't stand seeing Luna get betrayed. Still

"Do you know how much that hurt Luna? That idiot was always waiting for someone to need her. She was always waiting. Yet, you took her away to the demonic realm—So she was always crying!"

"Then...."

Bram muttered and the gale became stronger.

"Then, what should have I done!? She was always being betrayed! Always betrayed by those she believed in! Could you leave her alone like that? In the demonic realm no one will betray Luna! She won't get hurt any further!"

"Shut up. I don't care about your beliefs. Your way only makes her cry. Who decided that you'll be happy when you don't get hurt?"

"Then you're saying you can protect her? You can make her happy? You think a human like you can protect her, a devil?"

"...Don't ask something so stupid."

Repelling a close shockwave, I shouted.

"Obviously I can! Who do you think I am!? I said I'll protect her! I promised it. Yeah, I vowed it! So I'll make Luna happy at all costs! It doesn't matter that she's a devil! I'll smack everyone, who gets in the way. Even her father!"

"...You think you can be happy staying together with a devil?"

"Anything wrong in thinking that? I'm happy to have her by my side. That's all. Don't make me repeat myself! It doesn't matter that she's a devil!"

I shouted vehemently, when the attacks suddenly stopped.

Bram looked dumbfounded at me, with wide open eyes.

We were only separated by about five metres.

I used that chance to accelerate and approached Bram.

"Kuh!"

Bram moved his right hand quickly.

"Too slooow!"

I stepped forward swiftly with my left leg, when a shockwave grazed my right cheek.

Bram wanted to move back, but I didn't let him. At the same time that I raised my lowered knee, I spun my waist and thrust my left arm out—and drove the bottom of my left palm into Bram's right side.

The force from the first blow surged through his body.

"WRAARI!"

The force from the second blow, surged through him and crushed his insides.

I struck with the bottom of my palm, rotating it in a corkscrew movement, into Bram's left side, —Bram instantly coughed up blood from his mouth. A technique for crushing the organs by utilising the powerful effect of two surges colliding—a kind of KI attack and the special move of the Nanjou School of the mental moon-state water. The only technique I'd learnt from my gramps.

Most likely his innards had been crushed. While coughing up blood, Bram got on his knees.

“—I win.”

I declared while looking down upon Bram.

“...won't accept.”

As he coughed up more blood, Bram said while groaning.

“Human, you certainly might be happy by being with Luna. But, Luna won't. What do you think will happen to her... when she loses you?”

Bram stood up slowly.

“...It was the same with my wife. She was a human. When I was still a weak devil, she helped me when I was wounded. She told me it doesn't matter that I was a devil. She stayed at my side.”

With shaking fists, Bram continued with a “But”.

“My wife was killed by humans. The guys who killed her said that by staying with a devil you become a devil yourself.”

Bram looked at me. His eyes, shaken by sadness, looked straight at me.

“My wife said—that it doesn't matter that I was a devil. She loved me. But she wasn't loved by humans. My wife lost everything because of me. Her family, her friends, her parents. Everything. All she had left was.... me. Only a dirty devil remained with her.”

Bram pointed out his right hand while faltering.

“My wife was happy at my side before she lost everything. But after that she became sad. Her sadness ended with being cursed as a devil and getting killed....Do you call that happiness? Can you say that my wife was happy?”

Bram let loose a shockwave from his right hand, but it didn't reach me and just hit the ground.

“Luna will be the same. She'll suffer the same as I did. I won't allow that. Such sadness... Luna wouldn't be able to bear it.”

Bram desperately extended his hand.

Ahh, he really treasured Luna.

A puddle of blood had already formed at Bram's feet. Bram was bleeding

from all over his body. It wasn't just from the damage I dealt.

That probably was the compensation.

Powerful devils shouldered a high risk by coming to the human world.

Their original powers are taken away temporarily and they aren't able to use them. That's what Gogyou-san and Elni said.

The compensation for forcefully using his powers. My attacks. His fatigue. At last, Bram collapsed onto the ground.

"Father!"

Luna rushed over to Bram and gently lifted his body.

"...Father, thank you. I was really happy that you were so concerned about me....But, I am sorry. I still want to stay with Shinobu-san."

"You'll suffer sadness, you know? Our lifespans are different compared to humans. He can't be by your side forever. Do you understand that?"

"I do. Nevertheless I want to stay with him."

Luna said with a firm nod.

"Shinobu-san knew that I am a devil... yet he extended his hand towards me. He told me to stay by his side and that he would beat up anyone that made me cry. He promised me that he would protect me from now on and make me happy, so I shall go with him."

That was the promise from seven years ago. The promise I had forgotten. The precious promise.

"So I was always waiting for Shinobu-san to call me..."

Ahh, right.

Elni's ring links the wearer and a guardian spirit based on their relationship.

The reason Luna showed up, was that at the bottom of my heart I had wished for Luna.

"...But he had forgotten about me. We had finally reunited, but he acted all cold...."

With a gentle smile, Luna continued with a "But".

"Although he had forgotten about me, he still 'welcomed me back'. Even when he found out that I am a devil, he told me to stay by his side and held my hand. He even patted my head. And he protected me... He kept his promise."

Luna gave me a smile.

"—So, I will always stay by Shinobu-san's side."

Those were the words that I'd always longed for.

"....Yeah, stay with me forever."

My chest warmed up. I couldn't stop myself from hugging Luna.

So warm. Yeah, it was Luna.  
I tightly hugged Luna as to confirm her existence.  
“Shinobu-san.”



The arms around my back were lightly shaking.  
Luna was crying. She was crying happily. So I—  
“...Hey.”  
“Ahn?”

Who was interrupting this touching moment?  
I frowned and faced the voice—down at my feet.  
“Bastard, are you screwing with me? Not only did you step on me, you even tried to do something to Luna!”  
Somehow, the old man Bram was making a fuss at my feet.  
“Fuhn!”

I shut him up with a kick of my heel and looked at Luna again.  
Her wet eyes. Her flushed cheeks. Her soft pink lips. Lips. Aww, her lips.  
“Hey, bastard! I won’t let you! Stop it!”  
Old man Bram clung to my waist and desperately tried to pull me away.  
When I looked closer, his left arm was missing. It was gone from the elbow down.  
“Mh? Oh, this? I left my left arm in the demonic realm to control my powers.”

Maybe he noticed my look, but the old man explained it kindly. Nobody asked, you know. I once again kicked him away.  
“Ugg! H- How violent! I can’t hand Luna over to someone like you!”

The old man crawled back.

So annoying, seriously.

“Go away. This is a great moment right now.”  
“Shut up! I won’t acknowledge you!”  
“Ah, ouch! Y- You hit me! Please stop it, Dad!”  
“WHO ARE YOU CALLING DAAAAD!”

...Damn, he really hit me. I only hustled him away.  
As he got up, he wobbled,  
“...What are you guys doing?”

When I turned towards the voice, Elni stood there. Beside her was Gogyou-san.

“While we were fighting to the death, you guys were playing around?”  
Elni shouted angrily.

“No fair! Let me in too!”

For now, I ignored Elni and looked Gogyou-san in the eyes.

“...Gogyou-san, are you okay?”

Her clothes were torn at parts and her arms and legs had scratches.  
But Gogyou-san answered with a small smile.

“I’m fine. Rather, are you okay, Nanjou-kun?”

To be honest, I wasn’t okay at all. If I were to relax, I would fall down flat.

But Shinomun was a man. A proud Japanese hero. A brave gentlemen.

“Never felt better. My body hurts a bit here and there, but I’m totally fine.

It’s on the level of mosquito bites.”

I acted strong, with shaking legs.

“Hmm. Then I’m okay too. Your attacks felt like the touch of a baby.”

When I turned around, old man Bram was acting strong with shaking legs also.

“...He’s Luna’s father? He seems like an idiot.”

Elni said openly and a blue vein popped up on the old man’s forehead.

“But he sure is a strange devil. He’s a devil, yet he’s got a guardian spirit.”

“...Guardian spirit?”

The old man make a perplexed expression and Elni nodded with a “Yeah”.

“I’m a Goddess, so I can tell. But it sure is weird. A devil is the complete opposite of a guardian spirit...”

Elni stared at the old man with narrow eyes.

“It’s a woman. Blonde hair and blue eyes. Quite the beauty.”

“...Can’t be.”

The old man took a step forward, approaching Elni.

“Does that woman have a scar under her eye? A small scar. No, it’s supposed to be covered by her blonde hair. Does her hair cover her left eye?”

The old man asked Elni with shaking shoulders. Elni made a surprised expression and answered.

“Wh- What? You hadn’t noticed it yourself? It’s like you said, her bangs are covering her left eye. See—”

With a small gesture, Elni extended her hand towards the old man’s left shoulder.

“Ahh....”

A joyful voice escape the old man’s mouth.

For just a moment, the transparent silhouette of a beautiful woman appeared before us. Then she smiled at the old man, opened her mouth a bit and muttered something.... Then she quietly disappeared.

“...She was always by my side.”

The old man mumbled and shaked lightly.

“Hey...”

I called out to the old man.

“As a fellow human, I’ll tell you this: Your wife.... was happy. Even if she was rejected by everyone.... I’m sure she would tell you that she was happy.”

“...I know that.”

The old man said as his voice shaked.

“I knew that all along. I just....was so lonely.”

He'd always been sad, having lost his beloved so early.

“But she's always watched over me....”

When the old man raised his head, he smiled.

“Old man...”

“Don't say anything else.”

The old man interrupted me and headed for Luna.

“...You're free to come back whenever you're lonely.”

After saying just that, the old man walked away.

But Luna chased after him and hugged him from behind.

“Thank you, Father. I... do not know my real father, so you are the only father I have.”

“...Thanks.”

The old man nodded with a tearful expression.

“Hey, perverted old gentleman.”

“Who are you calling a perverted old gentleman!? You damn born-pervert!”

“I... I'm a born-pervert? Hey, try saying that to my face! Are these the eyes of a pervert!?”

I opened my eyes widely.

“....Mhm. That's a rocking pair you have there.”

He praised me.

“W- Well, whatever. Ehm, I have something to tell you. Well, ehm, it's...”

I said while I scratched my head and the old man made a perplexed expression.

Aww, I didn't really want to say it. I didn't want to, but I had to take responsibility.

I lowered my head to the old man.

“Thank you!”

I was so embarrassed that I couldn't raise my head for a while.

“...Don't make Luna cry.”

When I raised my head, the old man threw me something with a look of uncertainty.

“I'll leave that with you for now.”

I caught it with my right hand and looked at it....it was a blue ring.

“...Luna is a devil. If you plan to stay by her side, then soon enough you'll have to form a contract with her.”

After he gave Luna a gentle look, he continued.

“Nanjou Shinobu, if you put on that ring, you won’t be affected by devils. From now on, you’ll protect Luna.”

Geez. Now I’d have to lower my head once more.

I’d kept my head lowered until the old man disappeared.

“...Shinobu-san.”

I turned towards the voice and Luna smiled as she stood beside me.

Ahh, I could protect her properly this time. When I thought that, all the strength left my body and I wobbled.

“Sh- Shinobu-san!”

“Nanjou-kun!”

Luna and Gogyou-san quickly extended their arms, but

“There”

Elni was faster. She grabbed my arm and pulled me close to her.

“Got a Shinomun!”

Elni shouted a “Yay”, took my hand and tried to pull me somewhere. I was dragged away.

“W- Wawah. A kidnapping! Shinobu-san is being kidnapped!”

“Nah, this is one of Elni’s jokes....probably.”

Gogyou-san tried to calm down the panicking Luna.

“Good for you, Shinobu.”

When I looked up, Elni was wearing a bright smile.

Yeah, really good.

I smiled as I was dragged away. I couldn’t suppress my teary smile.

“Haha!”

I laughed loudly.

At home, Nazuna and Mom had been waiting. Waiting for Luna and me.

They would surely tell us:

—Welcome back.

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# Epilogue

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This morning, I woke up earlier than my alarm clock. When I turned my head and looked at the clock, I noticed that I'd woken up two minutes earlier than usual. Going back to sleep now would prove to be difficult. No, to begin with, Luna wouldn't allow me to go back to sleep.

Lately, due to some kind of influence, Luna would attack me with tickling, poking or by pressing her body against me to wake me up.

Since it was her, I'd underestimated her, but she was surprisingly good. She herself might not be aware of it, but pressing her body against me was pretty erotic.

Sometimes her big breasts would hit my face, which woke me up for sure. Maybe Luna had noticed that I wake up more consistently when she presses her body against me, she has been using it more often. I was happy, but also embarrassed. Shinomun was embarrassed. Just as I thought that Luna was taking her time today,

“Mh?”

I felt a soft pressure and warmth on my arm.

“....Nazuna?”

The job of waking me had been snatched away by Luna, so recently Nazuna had started to sneak into my bed, so that I'd pay more attention to her. Even a few days ago when I'd stayed up very late, Nazuna had suddenly entered my room and said “...Brother, you're still up.” with a sad expression. Then she shuffled back to her own room.

“Nazucat is such a bad girl.”

“Mm~ Shinobu~ More~”

A strangely erotic voice from a silver-haired girl---Elni.

She was making chewing movements with her mouth, so she must be dreaming about food.

But what an outfit to sleep in. She had taken off her usual yellow hoodie, but for some reason she was wearing a gym outfit, even bloomers.

On her gym T-shirt was written “Elni” ...but there was something else. I took a close look. Bloomers. An endangered species. A treasure embodying men's hopes and dreams. Ahh, what was I supposed to do now? Should I worship it with 'Thanks~'?

“No, no, no.”

I had unintentionally folded my arms. But the bloomers weren't the problem.

Sorry to all the bloomer fans, but the pressing matter here was Elni. Why was she sleeping here? And even in bloomers. Just what was going on? Had Elni and I participated in a sports tournament in the middle of the night?

"...Ah, no. I remember now."

Last night, Elni had come in through my window and told me "I got an anime DVD, so let's watch it together", so we watched anime all night. Around 3am I'd gotten sleepy and kept dozing off, so Elni had told me "If you're sleepy, sleep in the bed. I'll go to sleep now too" and then we went into the same bed. Since I'd been so sleepy, I'd forgotten to make a comeback and just fell asleep.

"Oh my, no problem then."

I mean, Shinomun didn't do anything. I made a gasp of relief, but "Shinobu-san, it is morning~"

Along with a gentle voice, I heard the knocking sound on my door. I jumped up and panicked. Now that I thought about it, this situation was only bound to cause a misunderstanding.

"Brother, it's morning~ Today I'm here too~"

Wh- Why was Nazuna also here today of all days!

"Elni, wake up. Wake up and get out of here."

In my panic I shook Elni, but she still wasn't fully awake. Elni clung to my arm. In a mere few seconds, the situation took a turn for the worse. All the colour left my face and I desperately tried to get Elni off. But Elni clung tightly to me and wouldn't let go.

In this situation, the door of my room swung open as Luna and Nazuna appeared. Both were giving me warm smiles while saying "Brother~" and "Shinobu-san~", but the moment they saw Elni and I, they instantly froze as they continued to smile. Just like they'd been petrified.

"....A b- bloomer cosplay maniac!"

Luna recovered first from the petrification and exclaimed in shock. But only for a moment. Leaving aside the still petrified Nazuna,

"I, I will not lose!"

Luna clenched both her fists before her chest and declared as such.

Exactly what kind of battle was she going to fight in? A bloomers battle?

"Shinobu-san! I will not lose!"

"Y- Yeah. I don't get it, but give it your best."

For starters, I cheered on Luna.

...But still. I made a small sigh.

Looks like my troublesome days would continue for a while longer.



# Afterword

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Nice to meet you, I'm Gotou Yuujin.

With this volume of "TsukiTsuki" I managed to make my debut.

I submitted my work 14 times to MF Bunko J. It was a long and thorny road until I got a prize, but it paid off. I was touched to tears that my hard work paid off.

Okay, no about "TsukiTsuki". To say it simply, it's a story that goes like this: Wake up one morning to find a blonde beauty (with a dynamite body) to be your slave, what the!?

Just like the summary says, it's a heartful school love comedy with a guardian spirit!

...Well, the latter part of the script I submitted had some unbelievable development of the MC go to the demonic realm to fight some grandiose battle (in short "Hell Tour" <-my editor named it), but now it's a straight love comedy. I'm also relieved. I'm truly satisfied with how things have turned out now.

It got a bit late, but I would like to address some thanks now.

First my editor in charge, Shouji. To be honest, this work wouldn't have been possible without Shouji. Detailed checks, precise instructions and a swift working pace. Thank you so much for the gentle support to the trouble-making me. Please take care of me from now on too.

Next, the awesome illustrator, Korie Riko. When I saw the illustrations at home, I bowed my head numerous times and said "Thank you so much". Such wonderful pictures are wasted on a newbie like me. I'm truly grateful. Also, Korie's blog is really interesting. I'm often reading it.

Also my thanks to the chief editor Misaka, the Judges from the price committee and everyone in the editing department.

Furthermore thanks to my friends, my teachers at school, my dog Mimi, my cat Rinri, my first crush and my computer, which suddenly blew up when I corrected my script!

Lastly, I would like to thank the readers for reading my "TsukiTsuki".

There is nothing more joyful for an author if the readers laughed or liked the work even a bit. I believe there is nothing more wonderful than making others happy with a self-written book.

I'll still work my hardest from now on, so I would be happy if you continue

reading.  
Gotou Yuujin



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## Credits

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